

10

Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta

The Discourse on the Lion-roar of the Wheel-turner | D 26/3:58-79

Theme: Political power and spiritual power

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1 Sutta summary and highlights

1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY. The **Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta** (D 26) gives an account of the wheel-turner or universal monarch (*cakka,vatti*) [2.1] Daḷha,nemi and eight of his successors, closing with the advent of Metteyya Buddha. Using mythical language, it gives us an insight into the early Buddhist view of kingship and governance, especially how moral virtue is closely linked with socioeconomic conditions. Like the **Aggañña Sutta**,¹ it, too, centres on the theme of how crime arises in society. Textually, however, the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta, as it were, carries on from where the Aggañña Sutta ends, focussing itself more on a discussion of power, political and spiritual, that is, *the proper role of the ruler*, and, in a somewhat prophetic tone, gives us *a vision of the future of human society*.

The Sutta opens with the Buddha teaching unprompted, exhorting the monks to “dwell with yourself as an island”² [§1.1], that is, to practise the four focusses of mindfulness [§1.2]. This opening passage is a well known stock from **the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16),³ and the openings of **the Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta** (D 22) and **the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta** (M 10).⁴ It leads into the Sutta’s worldly portion, a long account of 7 righteous universal monarchs [2], and the decline and revival of society in terms of moral conduct [§§2-26]. The same opening passage recurs at §27 which leads into the “morals” of the opening story, that is, teachings on the significance and benefits of meditation and recluseship.

While the Sutta opens with the Buddha exhorting the monks to meditate [§1.2], the result of which is the purifying of the mind and keeping Māra out [§1.3], the Dharma section, too, closes with the same passage [§27]. In the conclusion, the same meditation, satipatthana, is said to bring about “the monk’s five blessings” of long life, beauty, happiness, wealth and power. The Buddha explains their meanings in detail, declaring that true monastic *power* is that of spiritual awakening. [§28]

Steven Collins’ critical remark on the Sutta is helpful here:

[The Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta] depicts life in *time*, however good or bad, as slightly absurd; and therefore its opposite, *timeless* nirvana, as the only serious thing in the long run. I suggest that the intention (at least in part) of the long-drawn-out sequence of decline and revival, in all its detailed specificity, numerical and otherwise, and also of the humor and irony of the parable, is to induce in its audiences—or at least to make possible as a reaction from some among them—a sense of detachment from, or at least a (briefly) non-involved perspective on the passage of time.

(1998:481)

1.2 THE STORY OF THE 8 KINGS

1.2.1 What makes a wheel-turner? The Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta relates in some detail how karma works closely with moral conduct in a society [§§2-26]. When the ruler or authorities fail to remove and prevent widespread poverty, or introduce reforms too late, the cumulative effect is a general social decline. The story opens with a description of an ancient utopia ruled by the “wheel-turning monarch” (*cakka,vatti*), Daḷha,nemi (“strong wheel”) [§2], who renounces the world as the “sage-king” (*rāj’isi*) when the divine wheel disappears [§3].

¹ D 27/3:80-97 = SD 2.19.

² See **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16.2.26/2:100 f) & SD 9 (6).

³ D 16.2.6/2:101) = SD 9: see text [§1.2] n.

⁴ Respectively, D 22.1/2:290 = SD 13.2 & M 10.3/1:55 = SD 13.3.

The newly crowned king is troubled by the wheel's disappearance, but is reassured by his father, the sage-king, who tells him that the wheel is not inherited, but only arises with the ruler's virtuous conduct [§4], that is, the "noble code of the wheel-turner's duties" (*ariya cakka.vatti,vatta*), that is, to be a refuge to his subjects as well as "animals and birds," to treat well and support those whom he has conquered [§5.1], and to learn from the wise and virtuous holy men [§5.2].

1.2.2 Social statements. The new king does as he is instructed, and in due course the divine wheel appears [§5.3]. To effect his peaceful conquest of the world, he performs the horse-sacrifice, whereby the whole ancient civilized world is informed of basic moral values by way of the five precepts with a sixth provision [§5.4], which, to my understanding, means that the wheel-turner or universal monarch would not dethrone the rulers, but *shares power* with them as his feudatory regents or vassal king (*khattiya anuyutta*) [§6]. The wheel-turner rules his domain as a utopia, and so do the six successive kings come after him, ruling as wheel-turners [§§7-8].

The sociopolitical significance of this statement—that of the *peaceful* horse-sacrifice—should be well noted, for it is an unequivocal denunciation of the ancient bloody *aśva,medha* of the kshatriya rajahs.⁵ After the Buddha's time, the killing was merely *symbolic* (replaced by the pressing of the soma stalks and the grinding of the grain), or the *aśva,medha* was not performed altogether. Even today, a Hindu householder performs a simple fire sacrifice or breath-control ritual, which is declared to be thousands of times superior to the *aśvamedha*. Apparently, the Buddha's voice of moderation is still heeded even today!⁶

1.2.3 The eighth king demurs. The eighth king, however, is distressed when the divine wheel disappears, and disregarding or forgetting his father the sage-king's advice, does not consult him, and rules the country by his whims [§9.1]. When signs of decline arise in the country (by which time the sage-king must have died), subjects close to the king then approach him, telling him that he has not kept to the noble wheel-turner's code [§9.2].

On the king's request, they instruct him on the code [§10.1]. Either this move is too late, or the king does not fully implement his welfare programmes, **poverty** arises amongst his people, and the poor commit theft [§10.2]. On learning the source of the problem [§10.3], the king finances the poor [§§10.4-10.5]. Similar financing is given to others who steal [§11].

In due course, the financial assistance is abused, and the king realizes that he is unable to support the growing number of the needy any more, and decides to punish the thieves, instituting *capital punishment* [§12]. As a result, the thieves, in their desperation, too, *kill* their victims [§13]. As a result, the human life-span is reduced by half [§14].

So poverty leads to stealing which leads to *killing*, which leads to lying, which leads to *slander*, so that they look more ugly, which in turn leads to *sexual misconduct*, which leads to *idle talk*, and finally, *covetousness, ill will* and *wrong view*. At each stage, human life-span further decreases [§§15-17.4]. At this stage, abnormal lust, rampant desire and deviant conduct predominate. The Commentary here explains "**abnormal lust**" as incest, "**excessive greed**" or "neurotic desire," as unbridled materialism and consumerism, and "**deviant conduct**" as homosexuality (DA 3:853). [5.1; §17.5 n]

Poverty worsens, and so does morality, so that mutual disrespect became common [§18]. By this time, the human life-span has decreased to only 10 years, meaning that people physically mature faster and so live shorter lives. Morality is non-existent so that humans live like animals propelled by lust, hate and violence [§§19-20]. A terrible "seven-day war" breaks out and many flee into remote and hidden places [§§21.1-21.2].

1.3 THE WHEEL-TURNER SAṆKHA

1.3.3 Saṅkha and Metteyya. When the situation reaches its lowest point, people finally realize the futility of violence, give it up, and so begin to keep the precepts, initiating a social renewal [§§21.3-21.4] and increase in various wholesome conditions and ever longer life-spans [§§22].

When the human life-span reaches 80,000 years, the whole kingdom prospers and is thickly populated [§23]. The wheel-turner Saṅkha arises in the city of Ketu,mati (present Kusi,nārā) [§24]. Then, there

⁵ For details, see text [§6] n.

⁶ See Subhash Kak, "Ashvamedha," in Encyclopedia of India, Detroit: Thomson/Gale, 2006 1:62 f.

arises the future Buddha Metteyya⁷ [§25]. The wheel-turner Saṅkha, having rebuilt his palace, in due course, renounces the world under Metteyya and becomes an arhat [§25-26]. The Sutta then closes with the Dharma analogue of the myth, that is, the four satipatthanas and the five blessings [§§27-29].

1.3.2 Two “great men”? The fact that the wheel-turner Saṅkha renounces the world under the future Buddha Metteyya [§25] is a doctrinal problem—that is, if we are to accept that there can only be *one* “great man” (*mahā,purisa*) at a time on earth,⁸ and that he would either be a world monarch (if he remains a layman) or a world teacher, the Buddha (if he becomes a renunciant).⁹ The well known fact remains that there can only be *one* fully self-awakened Buddha at a time:¹⁰ we only *need* one Buddha to discover the path to awakening and declare it to us.

The juxtaposition of these two great men—they actually meet one another—clearly shows that the idea of the wheel-turner as presented in **the Cakka,vatti Sutta** (D 26) is a relatively early idea. It belongs to a period before **the Lakkhaṇa Sutta** (D 30), when the tradition of the 32 physical marks of the great man is well-developed.¹¹ **Furthermore, the Bahu,dhātuka Sutta** (M 115) states that there can only be *one* fully self-awakened Buddha and only *one* wheel-turner at a time.¹² Only in the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta do we find the two individuals appearing at the same time and in the same place.

1.4 A LATE SUTTA. The Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta is clearly a late discourse, composed probably during Asoka’s time, as it serves as a sort of monastic memorandum to the “world monarch” exhorting him in good governance. This is the only place in the Pali Canon where the future Buddha, Metteyya, is mentioned, which probably evinces the fact that the historical Buddha Gotama has passed away, and the Buddhist community is still struggling with the memory and meaning of his passing. While the Mahayana trend was to deify the Buddha, the more conservative Hinayana monastics worked on the Buddha-lineage, extending it into the near future (in cosmic time).

Although the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta gives an account of universal monarchs, and lists the seven jewels [§2.2.4], which are the universal monarch’s regalia, there is *no* mention of the 32 marks.¹³ It is clear from this discourse that its purpose is not so much the legitimization of the Buddha as a universal teacher, but as a memorandum to the emperor to practise *good governance*. It is likely that the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta was compiled at a time when the tradition of the 32 marks was not yet known or not yet in vogue. As such it is a discourse that is older than those that mention these marks.¹⁴

2 The cakka,vatti

2.1 DEFINITIONS OF CAKKA,VATTI

2.1.1 Etymology

⁷ On the future Buddha, see **The Buddha as myth** = SD 36.2(6).

⁸ There seems to be no scriptural ref for this, but we can possibly deduce from the fact that a great man would *either* become the wheel-turner or the Buddha, that once there is *either* of them, another such candidate would not arise at the same time and place. Of course, it can be argued that there *can* be one of both individuals at the same time and place, esp presented in **Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda S** (D 26/3:58-79), but this idea was never developed beyond this.

⁹ This prophecy is given in **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.1.5/1:88 f & DA 249 f), **Mahā’padāna S** (D 14.1.31/2:16 & DA 442-445), **Lakkhaṇa S** (D 30.1.1.2-1.2.1/3:142-179), **Sela S** (Sn p106 & SnA 2:449). **Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda S** (D 26) relates how the universal monarch Daḷha,nemi renounces the world in old age but is simply called “sage-king” (*rāj’isi*), not a fully self-awakened Buddha (D 26.3/3:60) = SD 36.10.

¹⁰ **Bahu,dhātuka S** (M 115) states that there can only be *one* fully self-awakened Buddha and only *one* wheel-turner at a time (M 115.14/3:65) = SD 29.1a.

¹¹ D 30/3:142-179 = SD 36.9.

¹² M 115.14/3:65 = SD 29.1a.

¹³ D 26/3:58-79 = SD 36.10.

¹⁴ See **Lakkhaṇa S** (D 30) @ SD 36.9(2.1.1).

2.1.1.1 FOUR SPECIAL QUALITIES. The term *cakka,vatti* (Skt *cakra,varti*) is here translated here as “wheel-turner” (*cakka,vatti*),¹⁵ but it is sometimes more freely rendered as “universal monarch,” or even “world emperor.” **The Saṃyutta Commentary** explains: “For, having turned the wheel that has arisen, he is a wheel-turner (*uppannañ hi cakkam vattetvā so cakka,vattī nāma hotī ti*) (SA 3:153).¹⁶

According to **the Sutta Nipāta Commentary**, “He is a *cakka,vatti* because he wields (*vatteti*) the wheel jewel (*cakka,ratana*), or, because he has the wheel jewel turned (*vatteti*). He turns with the wheel endowed with four characteristics (that is, the conditions for conciliation, *saṅgaha,vatthu*: generosity, pleasant, convincing speech, beneficial conduct and impartiality) for the benefit of others; and there is the turning of the wheels of posture (viz, standing, walking, sitting, reclining) in this.”¹⁷

The Bāla Paṇḍita Sutta (M 129) says that the wheel-turner has these four special qualities, namely: he is extremely handsome, of long life, free of affliction, and beloved to the brahmins, which are recounted in the Dīgha Porāṇa Tīkā.¹⁸ **The Iti,vuttaka Commentary** (by Dhamma,pāla) explains that the nature and role of the wheel-turner mostly in terms of Buddhist doctrines, which is paraphrased here.¹⁹ He is a rajah in that he delights (*rañjetīti rājā*) the world with the four marvellous things (*acchariya,dhamma*) (as stated in **the Bāla Paṇḍita Sutta**) and the four bases of conciliation (*saṅgaha,vatthu*).²⁰ He is said to cause the wheel jewel to turn (*cakka,ratanam vatteti*) by means of the four wheel of success (*sampatti,-cakka*), which the Dīgha Porāṇa Tīkā identifies as those listed in **the Cakka Sutta** (A 4.31), as follows:

SD 36.10(2.1.1)

Cakka Sutta

The Discourse on the Wheels | A 4.31/2:32

A 4.1.4.1 = Aṅguttara Nikāya 4, Catukka Nipāta 1, Paṭhama Paṇḍāsaka 4, Cakka Vagga 1

Theme: The four bases of true success

1 ***Bhikshus, there are these four wheels, endowed with which gods and humans the four wheels turn, endowed with which gods and humans would gain greatness and abundance in wealth in no long time at all.²¹ What are the four?

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| (1) Living in the conducive place | <i>paṭirūpa,desa,vāso.</i> |
| (2) Associating with true individuals | <i>sappurisūpassayo.</i> |
| (3) Setting the self [the mind] on the right course | <i>atta,sammā,pañidhi.</i> |
| (4) The merit of good done in the past | <i>pubbe ca kata,puṇṇatā.</i> |

These, bhikshus, are these four wheels, the four wheels turn for gods and humans endowed with them, and with which gods and humans would gain greatness and abundance in wealth in no long time at all.

- 2 *Patirūpe vase dese* For the one who dwells in a conducive place,
ariya,mitta,karo siyā who befriends the noble ones,

¹⁵ Not all scholars are certain of the derivation or meaning of *cakka,vatti*: see eg K R Norman’s comments on Tha 822 (Tha:N 241 n822).

¹⁶ For the earliest refs to the “great man” (*mahā,purisa*) and its evolution, see **Lakkhaṇa S** (D 30) @ SD 36.9 (3.1).

¹⁷ *Cakka,ratanam vatteti, catūhi sampatti,cakkehi vattati, tehi ca param vatteti, para,hitāya ca, iriyā.patha,cakkā-nam vatto etasmim atthi ti cakka,vatti* (SnA 2:449, cf 454). On *iriyā.patha,cakka*, see DA 249 = MA 3:365 = CA 40; AA 1:120 = 2:284.

¹⁸ M 129.42-46/3:176 f) = SD 2.22; cf (**Cakka,vatti**) **Abbhuta Dhamma S** (A 4.130/2:133) = SD 36.10 (2.1.2); DAT:VRI 1:381. This section suggests that the wheel-turner has great charisma, on which see Piyasilo, *Charisma in Buddhism*, 1992h.

¹⁹ ItA 77; cf DA 249, 443; MA 3:152; AA 3:178, 180; KhpA 170; SnA 449; CA 40.

²⁰ Def in **Saṅgaha Bala S** (A 9.5.6/4:364) & SD 2.21 (1.2.2); see also **Lakkhaṇa S** (D 30.1.16/3:152) & **Cakka S** (A 4.31/2:32) [2.1.1]. The Buddha, too, has them (ItA 1:8).

²¹ *Cattār'imāni, bhikkhave, cakkāni, yehi samannāgatānam deva,manussānam catu,cakkam vattati, yehi samannā-gatā deva,manussā na cirass'eva mahantattam vepullattam pāpuṇanti bhogesu.*

*sammā,paṇidhi,sampanno
pubbe puñña,kato naro
dhaññam dhanam yaso kitti
sukhañ c'etam adhivattaṭi ti*

who is accomplished in right application (of mind),
a man who has done merit in the past—
grain, wealth, fame, glory,
and happiness, too, rolls to him.

— — —

2.1.1.2 SPECIAL QUALITIES. For the wheel-turner, endowed with these four wheels, it means that his status is the result of the following:

- (1) he lives in a place that is *strategically located* (in a central position and where the socio-political conditions are right);
- (2) he has a loyal following who are wise and resourceful, and a populace that is intelligent, mature, healthy and capable;
- (3) he has set himself on a proper course of kingship (such as keeping to protocol); and
- (4) this is the result of his having done many great good in past lives.

Besides these qualities, the wheel-turner is invariably also attributed the following epithets reflecting his goodness and supremacy [§2.1]:

- *dhammika*, he is just;
- *dhamma,rājā*, a Dharma-rajah or just king, or one who keeps to his code of royal duties; [§§5.1-5.5]²²
- *vijitāvī*, he is a conqueror;
- *cātur-anta*, a ruler of the four quarters, that is, a world monarch;
- *janapada-t,thāvariya-p,patta*, he has brought social stability, and he is secure in the country;
- *satta,ratana,samannāgata*, he is endowed with the seven jewels [2.3].

A number of suttas, furthermore, say that he has “more than a thousand sons.” His dominion extends throughout the continent bound by the seas (*sāgara,pariyanta*); and is established neither by the rod nor by the sword, but only by righteousness (*adaṇḍena asatthena dhammen'eva abhivijiva*).²³

The wheel-turner is also a *dhamma,rāja*, a Dharma king, where *dhamma* (Skt *dharma*) has at least these key senses: (1) duties (*vatta*), that is, his tasks as a ruler to his realm and people; (2) justice, that is, a problem-based solving of issues and difficulties with the person-based bias, which today we call the rule of law (*dhamm'ādhipateyya*), and (3) natural truth (*dhammatā*), that is, his position is not something gained through political or military power, nor sustained by it, but naturally arising to him as a result of his own good karma²⁴ and present moral conduct [§4.2],so that his actions and compassion, too, attract and sustain goodness and prosperity in his realm.

2.1.2 The wheel-turner's charisma. One of the earliest descriptions we have of the wheel-turner is found in this discourse:

SD 36.10(2.1.2)

Cakka,vatti Acchariya Sutta

The Discourse on the Wheel-turner's Wonderful Qualities | A 4.130/2:133 (abridged)
A 4.3.3.10 = Aṅguttara Nikāya 4, Catukka Nipāta 3, Tatiya Paṇṇāsaka 3, Bhaya Vagga 10
Theme: Ānanda's charisma is like that of a wheel-turner.

²² On the duties of a rajah, see (5.4.1.4).

²³ **Mahā'padāna S** (D 14.1.31/2:16), **Mahā,sudassana S** (D 17.1.8-11/2:172), **Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda S** (D 26.-2b/3:59), **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.1.5/1:88); ItA 77.

²⁴ **Lakkhaṇa S** (D 30.1.3.2/3:145) and the rest of the Sutta details on the karmic background of the great man's 32 marks (D 10.1.4.1-2.31/3:145-178) = SD 36.9.

1a Bhikshus, there are these four wonderful, marvellous things about **a wheel-turning king**. What are the four?

- 1b** Bhikshus, if a company of kshatriyas visits to see the wheel-turning king, they are delighted at his *sight*.
Then, if the wheel-turning king speaks, they are delighted at his *speech*.
Bhikshus, the company of kshatriyas are dissatisfied when the wheel-turning king is silent.
- 2** Bhikshus, if a company of brahmins visits to see the wheel-turning king, they are delighted at his *sight*.
Then, if the wheel-turning king speaks, they are delighted at his *speech*.
Bhikshus, the company of brahmins are dissatisfied when the wheel-turning king is *silent*.
- 3** Bhikshus, if a company of houselords visits to see the wheel-turning king, they are delighted at his *sight*.
Then, if the wheel-turning king speaks, they are delighted at his *speech*.
Bhikshus, the company of houselords are dissatisfied when the wheel-turning king is *silent*.
- 4** Bhikshus, if a company of recluses visits to see the wheel-turning king, they are delighted at his *sight*.
Then, if the wheel-turning king speaks, they are delighted at his *speech*.
Bhikshus, the company of recluses are dissatisfied when the wheel-turning king is *silent*.

These, bhikshus, are the four wonderful, marvellous things about a wheel-turning king.

5a Bhikshus, there are these four wonderful, marvellous things about **Ānanda**. What are the four?

- 5b** Bhikshus, if a company of monks visits to see Ānanda, they are delighted at his *sight*.
Then, if Ānanda speaks, they are delighted at his *speech*.
Bhikshus, the company of monks are dissatisfied when Ānanda is silent.
- 6** Bhikshus, if a company of nuns visits to see Ānanda, they are delighted at his *sight*.
Then, if Ānanda speaks, they are delighted at his *speech*.
Bhikshus, the company of nuns are dissatisfied when Ānanda is silent.
- 7** Bhikshus, if a company of laymen visits to see Ānanda, they are delighted at his *sight*.
Then, if Ānanda speaks, they are delighted at his *speech*.
Bhikshus, the company of laymen are dissatisfied when Ānanda is silent.
- 8** Bhikshus, if a company of laywomen visits to see Ānanda, they are delighted at his *sight*.
Then, if Ānanda speaks, they are delighted at his *speech*.
Bhikshus, the company of laywomen are dissatisfied when Ānanda is silent.

These, bhikshus, are the four wonderful, marvellous things about Ānanda.

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This same discourse is found in the late **Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16), where, however, the two sections are reversed, with Ānanda being mentioned first.²⁵ This discourse is a piece of internal evidence that the concept of the wheel-turner was already accepted by the time of the Buddha's passing (at the earliest).²⁶ Although this discourse speaks of the fourfold charisma of a wheel-turner, the real focus is on

²⁵ D 16.5.16/2:145 = SD 9.

²⁶ The wheel-turner concept is, in other words, the *terminus ante quem* of D 16 (or the relevant part/s), the date before or by which the Sutta must have been compiled.

Ānanda, the Buddha’s personal attendant during the last 25 years of his life—that he, as a truly spiritual person, has *the wheel-turner’s fourfold charisma*, but since he is a streamwinner at that time, he is very much more than a wheel-turner. For, it is said in **the Dhamma, pada**,

<i>Pathavyā eka, rajjena saggassa gamanena vā sabba, lok’ādhipaccena sotāpatti, phalaṃ varaṃ</i>	Better than full sovereignty over the earth, or going to heaven, or lordship over all the worlds, is the noble fruit of streamwinning.	(Dh 178)
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2.2 ORIGINS OF THE UNIVERSAL MONARCH IDEA

2.2.1 Alexander’s empire. The first truly multicultural empire was the Achaemenid (550-330 BCE), centred in Persia, but extending over Mesopotamia, Egypt, part of Greece, Thrace, the Middle East, much of Central Asia and Pakistan. It was overthrown and replaced by the brief but multinational empire of Alexander the Great (356-323 BCE). Alexander and his army arrived in NW India in 327 BCE and left in 324 BCE for Susa. The following year he died painfully in Babylon at merely 32 of a mysterious illness. Alexander as “the lord of Asia,” inspired many Asian and European royalties for centuries after his death. Even to this day, generals and military strategists look up to him as an inspiration and military academies throughout the world still teach his tactical exploits.²⁷

Discourses such as **the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta** (D 16) and **the Mahā Sudassana Sutta** (D 17) allude to “the celestial city of the devas,” **Āḷakamaṇḍā**,²⁸ which could be Alexandria on the Indus, founded by Alexander the Great in 325 BCE, or Alexandria-of-the-Caucasus,²⁹ some 150 km north of today’s Kabul in Afghanistan. Possibly, the stories about Alexander (the prototype of the world conqueror) and the subsequent presence of the Indo-Greeks,³⁰ inspired the ancient Buddhists to formulate the “great man” ideology.

2.2.2 Ancient Middle Eastern empires. Although there were kings in the Buddha’s time, and some of them were key figures in Indian history, there was no conception of an emperor, much less that of a “universal monarch” who ruled over the whole world, or at least the ancient civilized world. However, there were empires in nearby Mesopotamia³¹ even before the Buddha’s time, followed by the empires of Alexander and of the Mauryas in the after-centuries.

The earliest empire was that of Akkadia, under Sargon the Great (2400 BCE). In the 15th century BCE, the New Kingdom of ancient Egypt, ruled by Thutmose III, covered Nubia³² and the ancient city-states of the Levant.³³ The first extended empire comparable to Rome was the Assyrian empire (2000-612 BCE). The Median was the first empire in Persia. In the 6th century BCE, the Medes, with the Babylonians, defeated the Neo-Assyrian empire, and established their own empire, which however lasted for only about 60 years.³⁴

²⁷ W (“Bill”) Yenne, *Alexander the Great: Lessons from History’s Undefeated General*, Houndmills (UK): Palgrave McMillan, 2010.

²⁸ D 16.5.18/2:146; D 17.1.3/2:170; Miln 2. The Vinaya uses *ālakamaṇḍā* as an adj—*vihārā ālakamaṇḍā honti*—meaning that it is densely populated (V 2:152), with Comy: “*ālakamaṇḍā* means ‘thickly crowded with people’ (*ālakamaṇḍā’ti ek’aṅganā manussābhikinnā*)” (VA 1219).

²⁹ Medieval Kapisa, modern Bagram, a small town in Parwan Province of Afghanistan, about 60 km north of the capital Kabul. In Classical times, westerners regarded the Hindu Kush as being part of their Caucasus mountains.

³⁰ See A K Narain, *Indo-Greeks*, Oxford Univ Press, 1957: App I & see also <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indo-Greeks>.

³¹ A historical toponym for the area centering around the Tigris-Euphrates river system, largely corresponding to modern-day Iraq, NE Syria, SE Turkey and SW Iran, and regarded as the cradle of early civilization.

³² Covering the Nile corridor, northern Sudan and southern Egypt.

³³ A Eurocentric term, meaning “rising” (of the sun), the east of Europe, ie, the littoral (coastal) regions of eastern Mediterranean, covering modern Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian territories.

³⁴ See eg Pryzluski 1929 (which I do not have access to at time of writing),

2.2.3 Early Indian parallels. It is unlikely that the wheel-turner (P *cakka,vatti*; Skt *cakra,varti*) ideology was rooted in any pre-Buddhist Indian tradition. However, there are some interesting parallels like the concepts of *adhirāja* and *samrāt*, often loosely translated as “emperor,” but Indian historian **A L Basham** notes that they “seem actually to imply lordship over a number of feudatories” (1954:94). Even the Magadha imperialism, which marked the beginning of an Indian empire, was simply a *centralized* realm, while the well-centralized Mauryan empire had remote vassal chiefdoms. These regions were unified through *conquests*, not contract, as in European feudalism.

The **Arthaśāstra** advises that a weak king should give voluntary homage to a powerful neighbouring king if necessary. The **Epics** and **Smṛtis** (post-Vedic sacred texts) discouraged “lawful conquest” (*dharma,vijaya*), that is, the ceding of territories. Such territories were merely reduced to vassal status. This, however, was not always the case, as during the Gupta period when Samudra Gupta (c335-375) extended his empire.

Mythically, there might be some early Indian connection with empire-building, albeit only conceptually. In the R̥gveda, for example, the god Varuṇa is often associated with the sun, which is referred to as the “wheel” (*cakra*).³⁵ The *cakra* of the fierce and powerful god Indra is a flying wheel-blade, a dreadful weapon of mass-killing.³⁶ It is well known that Indra is converted by the Buddha into a more sombre god, Shakra, who eventually attains streamwinning (Ency Bsm 3:593).

In short, we can best conclude that the early Buddhists only used familiar Indian terms, but were not impressed by the ideologies behind them. The Buddhist conception of the wheel-turner or *cakka,vatti* was clearly inspired from elsewhere.

2.2.4 The Maurya empire. The Maurya (321-185 BCE) was the largest and most powerful of the Indian empires, founded by Chandragupta Maurya. In the wake of Alexander’s westward withdrawal, the Maurya empire grew rapidly westwards across central and western India. By 320 BCE, the empire had fully extended itself beyond northwestern India, defeating the satrapies left by Alexander.

The Greek diplomat and writer, **Megasthenes** (4th century BCE), was sent by Seleucus Nicator (Alexander’s successor in Asia), to Chandragupta’s court as an ambassador. He described Pāṭalīputra, the Mauryan capital, as second in splendour only to Persepolis, the capital of the former Persian Empire. It had a wooden city wall 14.5 km (9 mi) long by 2.4 km (1.5 mi) wide, which had 570 towers, 64 gates, with a moat 274 m (900 ft) wide.³⁷ As such, it was one of the largest cities in the world in its time.

The greatest of the Mauryan emperors was **Asoka** (r 269-232 BCE), who was indeed the greatest of all Indian kings, and one of the most remarkable in world history for his relatively humane administration and global policies. After the bloody Kalinga campaign, where, by his own admission, “150,000 were taken captive, 100,000 were killed, and many more died,” he converted to Buddhism.³⁸ It was during his reign too that the Third Buddhist Council was held at Pāṭalīputra.³⁹

If the ancient Buddhists were inspired by stories of Alexander the Great to introduce the ideology of the great man and his marks, it was in Asoka’s reign the Buddhist clergy surely found it to their advantage to endorse Asoka as a wheel-turner of sort. Such a teaching would act as a memorandum to him to rule according to the wheel-turner’s code of duties (*cakka.vatti,vatta*) [§5.1].

³⁵ Rv 1.175, 4, 4:30, 4; or as the “wheel of righteousness” or *rta* (Rv 1.164, 11).

³⁶ Scholars like **A Wijesekhara** thinks that the Pali accounts point to the original state of the militaristic *power* of a conquering hero which is borrowed from the Vedic tradition. He proposes that the idea is based on the legend of the all-conquering hero Indra, the wielder and turner of the wheel of power. See “Wheel symbolism in chakravartin concept,” in A S Altekar et al (eds), *S K Belvalkar Felicitation Volume*, Banaras, 1957:267.

³⁷ Facts-on-File *Ency of World History* (ed Marsha E Ackerman et al), 2008, 1:270 f, sv Megasthenes; 333, sv Pataliputra.

³⁸ Basham 1954:55; Facts-on-File *Ency of World History* (ed Marsha E Ackerman et al), 2008, 1:33, sv Asoka.

³⁹ Thapar 2002:180-182; Macmillan Ency Bsm 2004:502 f (Mainstream Buddhist schools).

2.3 THE SEVEN JEWELS OF THE WHEEL-TURNER

2.3.0 The efficacy of the jewels. The seven jewels (*satta,ratana*)—the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem-jewel, the woman jewel, the steward jewel, and the commander jewel⁴⁰—are the regalia of the wheel-turner or universal monarch (*cakka,vatti*). The wheel-turner, says Dhamma,-pāla, is endowed with these seven jewels, and describes how they make him a universal monarch. “For, in regards to these [seven jewels], the wheel-turning king conquers the unconquered by the wheel jewel” (*tesu hi rājā cakka,vatti cakka,ratanena ajitaṃ jināti*) (ItA 1:77). The seven jewels not only legitimize the wheel-turner’s status, but they fully empower him to rule his realm.⁴¹

We are made to understand that the seven treasures, especially the wheel jewel,⁴² arise to the wheel-turning king on account of his *past good karma* (*puñña*) and *present moral virtue* (*sīla*). However, we are also informed that he has a huge powerful army and efficient palace bureaucracy (which are, apparently, also the results of his good karma). Understandably, where his army appears, the local ruler would judiciously submit to him rather than wage war and face annihilation.

2.3.1 The wheel jewel. The most important—that is, the most powerful and valuable—of the wheel-turner’s seven jewels is the wheel jewel (*cakka,ratana*), or more fully, the divine wheel jewel (*dibba cakka,ratana*) [§3.1]. It is its appearance and existence that first legitimizes and empowers the wheel-turner. The suttas say that when the wheel arises before the wheel-turner, he sprinkles it with lustral water and exhorts it, “Turn, sir wheel jewel! Conquer, sir wheel jewel!”⁴³ The wheel, it is said, then moves forward successively in all the four quarters, followed by the king and his fourfold army. There is a hint of a royal “horse sacrifice” (*aśva,medha*) here.⁴⁴ It is likely that the wheel-turner myth is the attempt of the Buddha or the early Buddhists in either ending the kingly bloody rituals or to reform it into a more wholesomely meaningful practice.⁴⁵

2.3.2 The elephant jewel. According to **the Bāla Paṇḍita Sutta** (M 129), the wheel-turner’s elephant jewel, “the king of elephants,” called Uposatha [Sabbath], is pure white, with the sevenfold supports,⁴⁶ and with supernormal power, capable of flying through the air. On seeing it, the wheel-turning king’s heart is inspired to train it so that it becomes a fine well trained thoroughbred elephant. The king mounts him in the morning, and after traversing the whole earth to the ocean’s horizon, he returns to the royal capital in time for his morning meal!⁴⁷

2.3.3 The horse jewel. The wheel-turner’s horse jewel’s trunk is all white (albino), with a raven-black head, and a mane as soft as *muñja* grass,⁴⁸ with supernormal power, capable of flying through the air, the king of horses—from the royal clan of horses—named Valāhaka [Thundercloud]. As in the case of the elephant jewel, the king mounts him in the morning, and after traversing the whole earth to the ocean’s horizon, he returns to the royal capital in time for his morning meal!⁴⁹ This is what some might today call the Royal Air Force.

⁴⁰ Respectively, *cakka,ratana*, *hatthi,ratana*, *assa,ratana*, *maṇi,ratana*, *itthī,ratana*, *gaha.pati,ratana*, and *pariṇāyaka,ratana*. See **Bāla Paṇḍita S** (M 129) for details of the 7 jewels, foll by the 4 blessings of beauty, longevity, excellent health and great charisma (M 129.34-47/3:172-177). They are fully expl in **Param’attha,jotika 1**, Comy to the late anthology Khuddaka,pāṭha (the first book of the Khuddaka Nikāya), commenting on the **Ratana S** (Kh 6) (KhpA 170-174): for tr, see KhpA:Ñ 185-188.

⁴¹ Only some main points are mentioned here: for more details, see **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17) @ SD 36.12 (2).

⁴² See **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17.1.7.2/2:172) & SD 36.12 (3.1.1).

⁴³ *Pavattatu bhavaṃ cakka,ratanam, abhivijjintu bhavaṃ cakka,ratanaṃ ti: Mahā Sudassana S (D 17.1.8/2:172) = SD 36.12; **Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda S** (D 26.6/3:62) = SD 36.10; **Bāla Paṇḍita S** (M 129.35/3:172) = SD 2.22.*

⁴⁴ On the *aśva,medha*, see **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17) @ SD 36.12 (2.1.3).

⁴⁵ See **(Pasenadi) Yañña S** (S 3.9/1:75 f) & SD 22.11 (1.2.2); SA 1:144; SnA 322.

⁴⁶ That is, 4 strong legs, 2 powerful tusks and its trunk.

⁴⁷ M 129.36/3:173 f = SD 2.22.

⁴⁸ *Muñja* grass, *Saccharum munja* Roxb, a soft grass, dark in colour. The grass is often worn by ancient Indian warriors (D 2:174; Sn 18, 440).

⁴⁹ M 129.37/3:174 = SD 2.22.

2.3.4 The gem jewel. The **Bāla Paṇḍita Sutta** (M 129) says that the gem jewel is a beryl of the purest water, eight-faceted, well-cut. It is so radiant that its light radiates all around for a whole league. When the king mounts the jewel on top of his banner and sets forth with his army in the gloomy darkness of the night, it lights up the whole area so that the villagers all around set about their daily work by its light, thinking it is day!⁵⁰ The light is so bright that even little ants can be clearly seen (KhP A 173). In modern army and warfare, this would be search-lights and flares.

2.3.5 The woman jewel. The **Bāla Paṇḍita Sutta** (M 129) describes the woman jewel as being beautiful, comely and graceful, of the best complexion, neither too tall nor too short, neither too thin nor too fat, neither too dark nor too fair, surpassing human beauty, though not reaching the beauty of the gods. Her touch is soft like a tuft of cotton-wool or of kapok. To the wheel-turner, when it is cool, her limbs are warm; when it is warm, her limbs are cool. Her body exudes the fragrance of sandalwood, and her mouth has the scent of lotuses. She rises before the wheel-turning king and retires after him. She is eager to serve, agreeable in conduct, and sweet in speech. Even in thought, she is never unfaithful to the wheel-turning king, how then could she be in body?⁵¹

2.3.6 The steward jewel. According to the **Bāla Paṇḍita Sutta** (M 129), the steward jewel, as a result of his past good karma, is endowed with the “divine eye,”⁵² whereby he sees hidden treasures, both with owner and ownerless. Whenever the wheel-turner needs wealth, he instructs the steward to “dowse,” as it were, for treasure. For example, sailing mid-stream on the Ganges, the steward could locate treasure and draw a pot full of silver and gold out of the water, and retrieve as much treasure as the king needs!⁵³

2.3.7 The commander jewel. The commander jewel, says the **Bāla Paṇḍita Sutta** (M 129), is wise, skillful, sagacious and shrewd,⁵⁴ capable of wisely advising the king on all matters, putting him at ease.⁵⁵ The **Mahā Sudassana Sutta** clearly suggests he commands the king’s armies. He is probably what we might today call the “prime minister.” As such, he is actually more than a mere advisor: he is, in fact, the crown prince who administers the whole machinery of the empire, so that the wheel-turner himself lives at royal ease. In short, he is the royal executive officer.

2.3.8 The seven treasures. While the wheel-turning king has his seven jewels that legitimize his position and power, the Buddha has the seven jewels (*satta ratana*) and the seven noble treasures (*satta ariya, dhana*).⁵⁶ The wheel-turner’s seven jewels are listed by the Buddha in the **Cakka, vatti Sutta** (S 46.42), alluding to temporal power and glory.

Then, the Buddha declares that with his arising, there also arise the seven treasures that are the awakening-factors.⁵⁷

The Commentary on the Cakka, vatti Sutta (SA 3:154 f) lists the wheel-turner’s seven jewels and then correlates them to the Buddha’s seven jewels (the awakening-factors), thus:

<u>The wheel-turner’s seven jewels</u>		<u>The Buddha’s seven jewels (awakening-factors)</u> ⁵⁸	
1. the wheel jewel	<i>cakka ratana</i>	mindfulness	<i>sati sambojjhaṅga ratana</i>
2. the elephant jewel	<i>hatthi ratana</i>	dharma-	<i>dhamma, vicaya sambojjhaṅga</i>
		discernment	<i>ratana</i>
3. the horse jewel	<i>assa ratana</i>	effort	<i>viriya sambojjhaṅga ratana</i>
4. the gem jewel	<i>maṇi ratana</i>	zest	<i>pīti sambojjhaṅga ratana</i>

⁵⁰ M 129.38/3:174 = SD 2.22; KhP A 172.

⁵¹ M 129.39/3:174 f = SD 2.22.

⁵² This is apparently ordinary clairvoyance, not the knowledge of others’ karma (see, eg, D 1:81).

⁵³ M 129.40/3:175 = SD 2.22.

⁵⁴ *Paṇḍito byatto medhāvī paṭibalo.*

⁵⁵ M 129.41/3:175 f = SD 2.22.

⁵⁶ Apparently, the number 7, besides its numerical function, had in ancient India reflects “a totality,” ie, an accomplishment (Dumont 1962:73).

⁵⁷ S 46.42/5:99 = SD 36.12(3.8).

⁵⁸ On the 7 awakening-factors (*satta sambojjhaṅga*), see (**Bojjhaṅga**) **Sīla S** (S 46.3/5:67-70) = SD 10.15. The list here is simplified. Fully, each item should be read, eg, as “the mindfulness awakening-factor jewel,” etc.

5. the woman jewel	<i>itthī ratana</i>	tranquillity	<i>passadhi sambojjhaṅga ratana</i>
6. the steward jewel	<i>gaha, pati ratana</i>	concentration	<i>samādhi sambojjhaṅga ratana</i>
7. the commander jewel	<i>pariṇāyaka ratana</i>	equanimity	<i>upekkhā sambojjhaṅga ratana</i>

The Commentary explains the connections between **the seven jewels** and **the seven awakening-factors** as follows. **Mindfulness** is just like the wheel jewel in that it *leads* (*purecarati*) all the factors or goodness of the four stages of sainthood (*catu, bhūmaka, dhamma*). In other words, just as the wheel jewel legitimizes the wheel-turner, mindfulness makes the saint.

Just as the elephant jewel is physically *the largest* of the wheel-turner's jewels, **dharma-discernment** is the key awakening-factor in terms of practice. Through discerning dharmas—being directly aware of the true reality of mental states—the mindful person goes on to be liberated.

The horse jewel is *the fastest* of the wheel-turner's jewels. Even so, **effort** speeds up our spiritual cultivation. The more effort we put into our practice, the quicker we attain liberation.

Just as the gem jewel brilliantly *shines*, even so **zest** brightens up our minds to dispel the darkness of the defilements with the light of wisdom (*ñāna*). Zest is the joyful energy that keeps us going until the goal of awakening is reached.

The woman jewel soothes the wheel-turned bodily and mentally, freeing him from all discomfort. Even so, **tranquillity** settles our body and mind, *clearing away all distractions*, so that mental concentration arises in due course.

The steward jewel provides the wheel-turner with whatever wealth he wishes for. Even so, **concentration**, the one-pointed mind, focusses our mental energies to fulfill whatever good wishes or attain our spiritual goal.

Just as the commander jewel is able to carry out whatever tasks allotted to him without any trouble, even so, the mind of **equanimity**, well-centred in mental stillness, *frees* the mind from all restlessness, liberating it from all troubles. (SA 3:154 f)

While the wheel-turner's seven jewels fulfill all *worldly* desires, the seven jewels that are the awakening-factors free us of such desires so that we attain a *higher* set of jewels or *spiritual* wealth, that is, awakening itself.

2.3.9 Other seven treasures

2.3.9.1 THE SEVEN NOBLE TREASURES. Another well known set of seven jewels, in this connection, is the seven noble treasures (*satta ariya, dhana*) or, more simply, the seven treasures (*satta dhana*) are, namely:⁵⁹

(1) the treasure of faith	<i>saddhā, dhana</i>
(2) the treasure of moral virtue	<i>sīla, dhana</i>
(3) the treasure of moral shame	<i>hiri, dhana</i>
(4) the treasure of moral fear	<i>ottappa, dhana</i>
(5) the treasure of learning	<i>suta, dhana</i>
(6) the treasure of charity	<i>cāga, dhana</i>
(7) the treasure of wisdom	<i>paññā, dhana</i>

(D 30.2.2/3:163, 33.2.3/3:251; A 7.5+6/4:4 f, 8.23/4:216-218; UA 285; cf Thī 342)

The Lakkhaṇa Sutta (D 30) says that the great man (*mahā, purisa*), here referring to the Bodhisattva, *if he remains in the house-life*, would become a wheel-turning monarch blessed with the seven jewels⁶⁰ [2.3.0], but *if he renounces the world*, would win these seven treasures, that is, the seven awakening-factors⁶¹ [2.3.8]. These noble treasures are “the supreme, highest and foremost wealth” (*anuttara uttama*

⁵⁹ See **Ariya Dhana S 2** (A 7.6/4:5 f) @ SD 37.6 (1.3). See also Soma Thera, “Treasure of the Noble.” Bodhi Leaves B27. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1965.

⁶⁰ D 30.1.2.1/3:143 & passim = SD 36.9.

⁶¹ D 30.2.2.4/3:163 = SD 36.9.

dhan'agga).⁶² While the wheel-turner's seven jewels are worldly, and hence impermanent, the treasures that are the seven awakening-factors can never be lost. **The Therīgāthā Commentary** notes that material wealth (gold and silver, etc) conduce neither to peace nor to awakening. They are not proper for recluses,⁶³ but the noble treasures conduce to their liberation. (ThīA 240)

2.3.9.2 THE TREASURES EXPLAINED. **The Vitthata Dhana Sutta** (A 7.6) explains the 7 treasures as follows:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| (1) Faith | confidence in the Buddha's awakening and his virtues. ⁶⁴ |
| (2) Moral virtue | abstaining from wrong in keeping with the five precepts. ⁶⁵ |
| (3) Moral shame | not doing wrong through body, speech and mind on account of moral shame. ⁶⁶ |
| (4) Moral fear | not doing wrong through body, speech and mind one account of moral fear. ⁶⁷ |
| (5) Learning | learning, mastering and realizing the Dharma as the three trainings. ⁶⁸ |
| (6) Charity | being open-handedly generous. ⁶⁹ |
| (7) Wisdom | fully realizing the four noble truths in all their aspects. ⁷⁰ |

(Also called **Ariya Dhana Sutta 2**, A 7.6/4: 5 f = SD 37.6)

The Hatthaka Āḷavaka Sutta 1 (A 8.23) declares that the layman Hatthaka of Āḷavī is endowed with all these seven "marvellous and wonderful qualities" (*acchariya, abbhuta, dhamma*). Here, they are not called "treasures."⁷¹ This is understandable because Hatthaka is declared by the Buddha to be the foremost amongst the laity who has a following through the four bases of conciliation (*saṅgha, vatthu*) (A 1:26).⁷²

2.3.9.3 THE BASES OF CONCILIATION. **The four bases of conciliation** or conditions for welfare (*saṅgha, vatthu*) consist of faith, moral virtue, charity and wisdom.⁷³ They are an abridgement of the 7 noble treasures (*ariya, dhana*) [2.3.9.1].⁷⁴ In the model of the four bases of conciliation, *moral shame* and *moral fear* are what motivate us to cultivate moral virtue: as such, they can be included in moral virtue. Great learning leads to and support wisdom. Charity can be subsumed under any of the other three qualities (faith, moral virtue, wisdom) or all of them.⁷⁵

These noble treasures are also called "**the virtues of great assistance**" (*bahu, kāra dhamma*) (D 3:282) since they provide us with the tools for personal development and for people-helping, which are vital qualities in right livelihood. Right livelihood is not merely Buddhist economics, but its higher purpose is the business of personal development, spiritual awakening and communal wellbeing.⁷⁶

The Dīgha, jānu Sutta (A 8.54) lists *spiritual friendship* as one of the four accomplishments (*sampadā*), the conditions for happiness here and now (that is, diligence, watchfulness, spiritual friendship and balanced livelihood); and the four qualities of faith, moral virtue, charity and wisdom are the characteris-

⁶² D 30.2.3(4)*/3:164 = SD 36.9. These 7 treasures are also listed in **Saṅgīti S** (D 33.2.3/3:251) & **Saṅkhitta Dhana S** (A 7.5/4:4 f) but without comment.

⁶³ V 2:294, 3:236-239; see also **Money and monastics** = SD 4.19-23.

⁶⁴ See **Buddhānussati** = SD 15.7.

⁶⁵ On the 5 precepts, see **Veḷu, dvāreyya S** (S 55.7/5:352-256) = SD 1.5 & **Right livelihood** = SD 37.8 (2.2).

⁶⁶ On moral shame, see **Moral shame and moral fear** = SD 2.5.

⁶⁷ On moral fear, see **Moral shame and moral fear** = SD 2.5.

⁶⁸ On the 3 trainings, see **Sīla samādhi paññā** = SD 21.6.

⁶⁹ On giving & generosity, see **Dāna Maha-p, phala S** (A 7.49/4:59-63) = SD 2.3 & **(Aṭṭha) Dāna S = Dāna S 1** (A 8.31/4:236) = SD 6.6.

⁷⁰ On the 4 noble truths, see **Dhamma, cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11) & SD 1.1 (6).

⁷¹ A 8.23/4:216-281 = SD 64.3.

⁷² See **Āḷavaka S** (A 3.34/1:136-138) = SD 4.8.

⁷³ See **Dīgha, jānu S** (A 8.54.10-15/4:284 f) = SD 5.10; also **Saṅgha Bala S** (A 9.5.6/4:364) SD 2.21.

⁷⁴ D 3:163, 267; A 4:5.

⁷⁵ See also Ency Bsm 4:513 f: dhana.

⁷⁶ See **Right livelihood** = SD 37.8 (6.2.4).

tics of a spiritual friend. These latter four are also the four accomplishments or conditions for spiritual and future happiness.⁷⁷

3 The “lion-roar”

3.1 DEFINITION OF A LION-ROAR. The **Mahā Sīha,nāda Sutta** (D 8) describes a “lion-roar” (*sīha,nāda*), thus: “The recluse Gotama confidently roars his lion-roar before assemblies. They question and he answers; he wins them over with his answers; they find it pleasing and are satisfied with what they have heard; they show that they are satisfied; they practise for the sake of realizing true reality; and they are satisfied with the practice.” (D 8.22/1:175).

The Buddha specifically defines a “lion-roar” as the declaration that *the four types of saints are found only in his teaching*.⁷⁸ The most elaborate lion-roars are those given by the Buddha himself in reply to the naked ascetic Kassapa’s question on asceticism (D 8) and in reply to Sunakkhatta’s accusation that the Buddha lacks spiritual powers (M 12). Other disciples have also made lion-roars: Mahā Kassapa on his ascetic forest practice,⁷⁹ and Sāriputta on his faith in the Buddha.⁸⁰

Based on all this, the commentaries say that a lion-roar is a roar of fearlessness (*abhīta,nāda*, DA 3:827), a fearless response, rejoicing in another’s remark or one’s own (DA 3:844), a statement of supremacy (or a foremost remark), of fearlessness, which cannot be debunked (*seṭṭha,nādam abhīta,nādam appaṭi,nādam*, AA 2:303, 4:171), such as declaring the presence of recluses (*samaṇa*) in the teaching (MA 2:7). There are at least a couple of discourses that are themed on the “lion-roar,” that is, **the (Anicca) Sīha Sutta** (S 22.78), **the (Catukka) Sīha Sutta** (A 3.33) and **the (Dasaka) Sīha Sutta** (A 10.21).⁸¹

3.2 THE WHEEL-TURNER’S LION-ROAR. The monk who is foremost of lion-roarers is Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja (A 1:23) on account of his readiness to answer the questions of any doubting monks. In **the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta**, a lion-roar is made by the sage-king (*rāj’isi*) [§3.2], who, having abdicated, renounces the world, and in due course admonishes his son, the new king, to be a “noble wheel-turner,” that is, a just monarch [§4].

The Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta is a powerful statement that no matter how much good is done in the world, evil still lurks around the corner. This is the nature of the world. The only effective merit is that which leads to renunciation, an undercurrent of the Sutta, since all the wheel-turners, except perhaps for the eighth, renounces the world. The most dramatic renunciation is clearly that of the wheel-turner Saṅkha under the future Buddha Metteyya [§26].

Renunciation here, of course, refers to *the letting go of evil itself*, that is, the taming and freeing of the mind, referred to the statement on the four satipatthanas, at the Sutta’s opening [§1.2] and near its end [§27], and the statement on the four divine abodes at the end of the Sutta [§28.1(4)]. Indeed, the whole discourse itself is a lion-roar, for the Sutta is a statement that better than the power and pleasures of a wheel-turner are *the blessings and liberation of the renunciant* [§28.1].

4 Buddhism of the future

4.1 THE FUTURE BUDDHA METTEYYA



Fig 4.1.1. Bodhisattva Maitreya, 2nd century, Gandhara

⁷⁷ A 8.54/4:284 f = SD 5.10. See also **Spiritual friendship** = SD 34.1 (4.1).

⁷⁸ D 2:152/16.5.27; M 1:64 f/11.2.

⁷⁹ M 1:214/32.7; S 2:202/16.5.

⁸⁰ D 16.1.16-17/2:82 f; see also **Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda S** (D 25/3:36-57) @ SD 1.4(2.2).

⁸¹ S 22.78/3:84-86 = SD 42.10; A 4.33/2:33 f = SD 42.10; A 10.21/5:32-36 = SD 81.2.

4.1.1 Metteyya in India. The future Buddha Metteyya (Skt Maitreya) is mentioned *only once* in the Pali canon, that is, in the **Cakka,vatti Siha,nāda Sutta**, in only two short paragraphs [§25 f]. Understandably, scholars have speculated on his origins. **A L Basham**, for example, notes as follows:

Among the doctrines of Zoroastrianism, which has strongly influenced other religions both East and West, is that of the savior (Saošyant), who, at the end of the world, will lead the forces of good and light against those of evil and darkness. Under the invading rulers of NW India Zoroastrianism and Buddhism came in contact, and it was probably through this that the idea of the future Buddha became part of orthodox belief. (A L Basham 1954:274)

The future Buddha Metteyya seems to have simply arisen up from nowhere, and so it is difficult to account for him, at least in early Buddhism. **P S Jaini**, in his article, “Stages in the Bodhisattva career of the Tathāgata Maitreya,” for example, says:

One would expect such an heir apparent to have been a historical person closely associated with the Buddha, someone like the elder (*thera*) Ānanda (before he disqualified himself by becoming an arhat), the chief attendant of the Teacher during his lifetime and transmitter of his sermons after his *parinirvāṇa*. Or one would suppose him to have been a contemporary king emulating the noble example of the bodhisattva Prince Vessantara, who could be singled out by Gautama publicly for such an honor. Maitreya, at least in the Theravāda canon, is neither, and hence there has lingered the suspicion that this legendary figure was added to the earlier genealogy of the Buddhas under the influence of a foreign cult of the Messiah (eg, the Zoroastrian Saošyant or the Persian-Greek Mithras Invictus).⁸² (P S Jaini, in Sponberg & Hardacre 1988:54)

There is a piece of internal evidence which weighs against the idea of Metteyya as an early Buddhist teaching. He appears in the **Cakka,vatti Siha,nāda Sutta** (D 26) at the time of a wheel-turner, that is, a “great man” (*mahā,purisa*). The great man tradition is that *no two of them can appear at the same time*, as stated in such discourses as the **Bahu,dhātuka Sutta** (M 115):

He understands that it is impossible, there is no chance, that two fully self-awakened arhat bud-dhas (*arahatā sammā,sambuddhā*) would simultaneously⁸³ arise in the same world system—this is not possible. (M 115.14/3:65) = SD 29.1a⁸⁴

Furthermore, it is likely that the idea first arose in one of early pre-Mahāyāna schools, which gave him the Sanskrit name Maitreya (which is close to the name of the Persian-Greek sun-god, Mithra). In Pali, the name became Metteyya, which is not mentioned anywhere else in the Pali canon.⁸⁵

We have very scanty evidence on the date of the rise of **Metteyya**. However, it is possible that he attained the status of the future Buddha by the time of the Kuṣāṇa king, Kaniṣka (ca 125 CE), when he

⁸² On the possible origins of Metteyya, and the connection between Ajita Maitreya and Mithras Invictus (the Sun God), see Étienne Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism* [1958], Louvain, 1988a:775-788.

⁸³ *Apubbam acarimam*, lit “not before, not after” (D 2:225,5; A 1:28,1; Pug 13,26; Miln 40,30; DhA 1:12,17).

⁸⁴ As in **Mahā Govinda S** (D 19.13/2:224), **Sampasādanīya S** (D 28.19/3:114), **Bahu,dhātuka S** (M 115.14/3:65), **Aṭṭhāna Vagga** (A 1.15.10/1:27 f), Vbh 335. Comy says that the arising of another Buddha is impossible from the time the bodhisattva take his final conception until his dispensation (*sāsana*) has completely disappeared (MA 4:113). For a discussion, see Miln 236-239.

⁸⁵ Accounts of Metteyya are found in **Anāgata,vamśa** (Anāgv) (ed J P Minayeff, JPTS 1886:42, 46 ff, 52), **Dhamma,saṅgaṇī Comy** (DhsA 415); E Leumann. *Maitreya,samiti*, Strassburg, 1919:184-226. The date of Anāgv is prob 12th-13th cent, and DhsA around 5th century. Anāgata,vamśa speaks of Metteyya as if he is already awakened, ie, as “Ariya Metteyya” or “Arya Maitreya.” See **Deva,daha S** (M 101) @ SD 18.4 (4.3) (Buddhist prophecy).

was depicted on one of his copper coins with the Greek inscription *Metrauo Boudo*.⁸⁶ It is possible that through the ancient Persian empire, which in turn was influenced by Mesopotamian cultures [2.3.2], and then Alexander's invasion [2.2.1], that the Buddhists first adopted the idea of the wheel-turner (*cakka, vatti*) probably from Ashurism,⁸⁷ and then the idea of the future Buddha Maitreya probably from Zoroastrianism. Alexander's empire and his after-centuries further fostered greater contact amongst the various religions of the region, encouraging and reinforcing such religious exchanges.⁸⁸

4.1.2 The Laughing Buddha. In Chinese Buddhism, Maitreya is called Milefo (彌勒佛 *Mílèfó*), "Maitreya Buddha," or more correctly, Mile Pusa (彌勒菩薩 *Mílè Púsà*), "Maitreya Bodhisattva." The late and popular Chinese transformation of Maitreya is known as Budai (布袋 *bùdài*, "cloth-sack"), so called because he carries with him a cloth sack. In Japan, he is called Hotei, and is regarded as one of the seven gods of fortune (七福神 *shichi fukujin*). According to Chinese folklore, Budai was an eccentric Chan monk of the Later Liang Dynasty (907-923 CE). He was a native of Fenghua (奉化 *Fènghuà*) (a county-level city in the north of Zhejiang province), and his Buddhist name was Qieci (契此 *Qìcǐ*, "promise this"), one of good and loving nature. In other words, he was a popular folklore figure incorporated into Chinese Buddhist mythology.



Fig 4.1.2. Milefo, Emei, Hsinfu, Taiwan

As he is invariably depicted as being care-free or laughing, he is popularly known as the "laughing Buddha" (笑佛 *xiàofó*). Budai is often depicted as an obese Chinese monk, with a bulging sack, and sometimes with prayer-beads. It is said that his few monkly possessions are in the sack, symbolizing his poverty but joyful contentment. Pious devotees with worldly needs, however, see it as a cornucopia that fulfills their prayers. As such, his image, symbolizing happiness and plenty, is often found in restaurants and businesses.

Those new to Buddhism or unfamiliar with it, often mistake **Budai** for the Buddha. Their differences should be well noted. Firstly, while Budai is depicted as obese, loosely dressed, and informal, the Buddha is seen as slim, broad-chested and composed. Secondly, while Budai is bald-pated, the Buddha has a head of whorled hair and a protuberance on his crown.⁸⁹

4.1.3 Phra Sangkacchai (พระสังกัจจายน์). In Thai Buddhism, Budai is sometimes confused with another similar monk widely respected in Thailand, that is, Sangkacchai, the Thai form of the Pali name of **Mahā Kaccāyana**. He was one of the great arhats of the Buddha's time, the foremost of monks who give deep Dharma teachings. According to the Dhammapada Commentary, he was so handsome that even a married man desired him as his wife, a thought that immediately transformed the lustful man into a woman (DhA 3.9).⁹⁰ Another pious tale says that he was so attractive that even the gods compared him to the Buddha himself, which he considered to be inappropriate. In either case, according to Thai folklore, he transformed his body to look unattractively obese.

In Singapore and Malaysia, where local Chinese often patronize Thai temples, we often see images of Sangkacchai there. Understandably, his popularity is due to his close resemblance of the Chinese Budai, which also blesses the temples with material support and benefits. The two images, however, have their own special characteristics:

⁸⁶ See Joe Cribb, "Kaniṣka's Buddha Coins—The official iconography of Sakyamuni & Maitreya," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 3,1 1980:79-87.

⁸⁷ On Ashurism, see **Maha Sudassana S** (D 17) @ SD 36.12 (21.4).

⁸⁸ See A L Basham 1954:274.

⁸⁹ See **Lakkhaṇa S** (D 30) & SD 36.9 (2.13.3) (A turban-like head).

⁹⁰ See **Soreyya-t,thera Vatthu** (DhA 3.9/1:325-332 (Dh 43); for Eng tr, see *Buddhist Legends* (DhA:B) 2:23-28. See **Self & selves** = SD 26.9 (1.6.3) & **Sexuality** = SD 31.7 (8.2).

- (1) Budai is always depicted bald-headed while Sang Kacchai has a head of whorled hair like other Buddha images.
- (2) Budai wears Chinese robes, sometimes with his pot-belly exposed, while Sang Kacchai always has Indian monastic robes fully covering him.
- (3) Budai is depicted in all four postures (standing, walking, sitting, and reclining), with a sack, sometimes with children, but Sang Kacchai is always depicted sitting with both his palms on his belly.



4.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE BUDDHIST LIFE

4.2.1 Prophecy is rare in early Buddhist Suttas, which generally focus on liberation here and now. There is no hell-fire warning of an eternal doomsday. Early Buddhist prophecies are more like a school-teacher's warning his students of the consequences of not keeping up with classwork and preparing well for the exams, and the kind of consequences that could follow otherwise. This is clear from the only prophecy in the Dīgha Nikāya, that of the coming of the future Buddha **Metteyya** (Skt Maitreya), found in the **Cakka,vatti Siha,nāda Sutta** (D 26), which was probably interpolated during Asokan times.⁹¹ [4.1.1]

4.2.2 Religions copy one another. So what if the myth of Metteyya or Maitreya has been borrowed from some other ancient religions? Any open-minded student of the history of religion would notice that religions, especially the world religions, freely borrow from older or popular religions. The strategy is simple enough: if we cannot convert a crowd, we convert *the ideas* it believes in.⁹² It is like expediently taking away children's toys and holding them so that they would come to you for them. Whoever holds the toys and sweets, have the children.

Indeed, there is little that is really original, even innovative, in the world religions except for how they view this world and the hereafter. The vocabulary, narratives and rituals of older popular religions or traditions are often freely adopted and adapted by them for their own purposes. It is rare that such a religion would freely acknowledge its sources, but is more likely that they would use these borrowings as if they owned these traditions and truths.⁹³

⁹¹ See further **Deva,daha S** (M 101) @ SD 18.4 (4.3) "Buddhist prophecy."

⁹² For Christianity, see eg Leif E Vaage (ed), *Religious Rivalries in the Early Roman Empire and the Rise of Christianity*, Waterloo, ONT: CSSR & Wilfrid Laurier Univ Press, 2006 & Gary Greenberg, *1010 Myths of the Bible*, Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, 2000.

⁹³ Within the last century, we see a growing number of Christians, especially the Catholics, practising Buddhist meditation. The situation has come to a point when we now hear, eg, of "Christian meditation" applied to such borrowings. The mind scientists, too, are having a field day studying and experimenting with Buddhist teachings and meditation, and coming up with new theories of the mind and consciousness, and new "meditation methods" with

The purpose of early Buddhism, on the other hand, is to train us into healthy adults and true individuals. If we accept Buddhism and seek to understand it through practice, then there comes a time when we would know how to put away these toys.⁹⁴

4.2.3 Religious change is still going on. Does it make Metteyya less Buddhist or unbuddhist if he assumes a new garb and role, unheard of before in early Buddhism? The historical Buddha has attained final nirvana, so that he is out of our reach, as it were. The future Buddha, however, is said to be living in Tusita heaven, awaiting the right time to appear in our world. Those who find the nature of the Buddha's awakening and liberation too abstruse or other-worldly to grasp—and they are legion—then, the next refuge is the future Buddha. Of course, he is not yet a buddha, but courtiers and loyal citizens would surely look up to the crown prince when the king is dead.

The **Sarvāstivāda** Vinaya, for example, contains a number of the later indigenous works that tell the story of the arhat **Piṇḍola** who is *forbidden from entering nirvana until the advent of the future Buddha, Maitreya*.⁹⁵ Piṇḍola, in other words, has become a sort of bodhisattva figure—regarded as the “wandering Jew” by the mediaeval Christians—who is capable of giving us succour if we have the fortune of meeting him. But he could be any humble dusty looking mendicant, so that we need to be hospitable to strangers we meet!⁹⁶ The Bodhisattva Kṣīti,garbha plays a similar role, vowing to free all beings from suffering (especially from the hells) before Maitreya's advent.⁹⁷

If Metteyya were a sweet-looking ripening fruit on a tall branch, then there are many passers-by who could not resist reaching out at it. Some of these people are ambitious rulers and visionary leaders. In Korea, for example, the rebel **Kungye** (died 918), founded the kingdom of Later Koguryō (901–918) in north Korea, renaming it T'aebong in 911, and declared himself to be Maitreya, the future Buddha, and his generals to be bodhisattvas.

In 690, **Wū Zétiān** usurped the Dragon Throne, and made herself the empress of a new dynasty, the Zhōu 周, the only woman ruler in Chinese history. Since the patriarchal Confucians were fervently against a woman being above them, much less as empress, Wū Zétiān astutely turned to Buddhism to legitimize her claims to the throne. From such documents as the *Lidài fābǎo jì*,⁹⁸ we know that she used two main strategies. Firstly, she claimed that she was the incarnation of Maitreya Buddha; secondly, she concocted the story that she has Bodhidharma's robe (which conferred patriarchship upon the holder).⁹⁹ In other words, she not only usurped the dragon's wheel, but also the Dharma wheel, putting both state and church under her imperial thumb.

4.2.4 Metteyya has not yet come. Since the 7th century, many had proclaimed themselves as Maitreya: Xiang Haiming (613); the empress Wu (690); Gungye, the Korean warlord and briefly king of Taebong (10th century); Yiguandao patriarch, Lu Zhongyi, believed God mandated him as Maitreya (1905); L Ron Hubbard, founder of Scientology, in his poem, “Hymn of Asia” (1955), hinted himself to be Maitreya. In 1973, a 27-year-old Frenchman, Claude Vorilhon, a car racer and a sports journalist, claimed to

professional and commercial labels (as part of the commodification process of our academic and economic systems). If, in some future time, when Buddhism is weak or forgotten, these meditations and mind teachings might be construed as being the original teachings of the Christians or the mind scientists! As such, we vitally need to keep the “original” Buddhist meditation teachings and practices alive with our own understanding and experience of them. (I have put “original” within quote-marks because I am aware that not all scholars think there is an “original Buddhism,” but Buddhism is an experiential and contemplative discipline, so they are missing the still point.)

⁹⁴ On **Buddhist borrowings** and their significance, see eg **K R Norman**, “Theravāda Buddhism and Brahmanical Hinduism: Brahmanical terms in a Buddhist guise,” 1991:193-200. The **3 fetters** are the first 3 of the 10 fetters (*samyojana*), viz: (1) **self-identify view** (*sakkāya,ditṭhi*), (2) **spiritual doubt** (*vicikicchā*), and (3) **attachment to rules and rites** (*sīla-b,bata,parāmāsa*): see (**Sekha**) **Uddesa S** (A 3.85/1:231 f) = SD 3.3(2) nn & **Udakūpama S** (A 7.15) = SD 28.6 (1.2.4.2).

⁹⁵ See **Arhats who became bodhisattvas** = SD 27.6b (3.2.3).

⁹⁶ See **Arhats who became bodhisattvas** = SD 27.6b (4.1.2).

⁹⁷ See **How Buddhism became Chinese** = SD 40b.1 (1.3.3.3).

⁹⁸ 歷代法寶記 (T2075.187b18-b23), compiled c780; see **How Buddhism became Chinese** = SD 40b.5 (5.4.1).

⁹⁹ See **How Buddhism became Chinese** = SD 40b.5 (5.2.2.2).

have met Elohim (God) in a UFO and told him that Maitreya would arise in France. Claiming that he is the one, he called himself Rael. Some Koreans believed that Maitreya will arise in their country. A few rebellion leaders in China and Thailand, too, proclaimed themselves to be Maitreya. And the list is growing.

Of all the world's religious figures, Metteyya or Maitreya is surely the most popular across faiths. At least since the Theosophist movement in the 19th century, many non-Buddhist religious groups and cults have used Maitreya's name and characteristics for their own teachers. The Ascended Master Teachings (early 1930s-1956) called him "Cosmic Christ." Some Ahmaddiyya Muslims claimed that their founder Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was Maitreya. Some Bahais believed that their prophet Bahauallah fulfilled the prophecy by appearing as Maitreya. Another group, Share International, formerly called the Tara Center, believe that he has been "in London" since July 1977, and will make himself public soon.

Such misplaced use and abuse of Maitreya's name is at best like reflected light. Without any warmth, such a light might dazzle some due to the darkness of their ignorance. We should not be blinded by such false light. Those with Dharma-eyes will see true reality, as in the bright light of day. Let us leave the dark corners of strange beliefs for the fresh open space of Dharma liberation. Let go of the past, it is gone; let go of the future, it is yet to come. Live now with lovingkindness (*mettā*): then we are ourselves Maitreya at heart.

Steven Collins' remarks here are sobering. In the "Story of the Elder Māleyya" (Māleyya,deva Thera Vatthu). Metteyya recounts both the history of his past fulfilment of the perfections and that of his future Buddhahood—at least in an imaginative way—as irreversible. Collins notes that

the historical and psychological realism of shock, difficult renunciation and struggle for understanding so carefully represented in Vipassī's and Gotama's cases in some texts and images is not apropos. Perhaps one might say that, from this perspective, in the future Buddhahood they describe, as in that of the future-Gotama in texts such as the *Jātaka-nidāna*, it is the Buddhahood as much as the futurity which is salient. The underlying salvific logic goes something like this: yes, the truth of impermanence applies to everything, even to Buddhism as a historical fact; but just as one can be sure that knowledge of the truth will fade so one can (now, in the present) be reassured that some day—even if theoretically very distant—there will be Buddhas to rediscover it.

(1998:394)

In a footnote, Collins adds that although the theme of the rarity of seeing a Buddha is often stressed, "in contexts where encouragement to religious practice rather than reassurance is the overriding concern." (id, emphasis added).

Let us recall that in the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta, the prophecy of future Buddha's advent is immediately followed by an admonition to practise the four focusses of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*)¹⁰⁰ [§§1.2+27]. The spirit behind all such early texts on Buddhist prophecy is that of *making personal effort in the right way for liberation in this life itself*.

5 Some important ideas and terms

5.1 PROBLEMS OF A CROWDED SOCIETY. A crowd does not think: it only feels, and often in an unwholesome or destructive manner. Due to a crowd's facelessness of numbers, it easily forgets, and is likely to repeat past mistakes or be goaded on unthinkingly by present desires or frustrations. The human crowd *is* the human species, man as a herd member. A biological species is driven mostly by its own instinct to propagate and perpetuate itself; hence, sexuality.

At the root of sexuality is the desire for self-replication. The *desire* is merely nature's way of keeping us in the rut of reproductive instinct. Having created others in our image, having created copies of ourselves, we feel compelled to nurture them; hence, the desire to have, to gather food for our creations and those we love and lust. Often enough, when we have more than enough or when the opportunity aris-

¹⁰⁰ D 26.25-27/3:75 f = SD 36.10.

es, the desire acts on its own seeking to assert ourselves on others: this is most primitive manifestation of *power*, of self dominating the other. All this is hinted at by the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta.

In the “social degeneration” cycle of the Sutta narrative, society degenerates into an amoral urban crowd of those whose life-span is 500 years (relatively short in traditional terms) and amongst whom, “three things were widespread, that is, abnormal lust, excessive desire and deviant conduct (*adhamma,-rāga visama,lobha micchā,dhamma*)” [§17.5]. The Commentary here explains them as follows:

- “**abnormal lust**” (*adhamma,rāga*) as incest, that is, “lust between mother and mother’s sister and father’s sister and maternal uncle’s wife and other such improper situations” (*mātā mātucchā pitucchā mātulānī ti ādike ayutta-ṭ,ṭhāne rāgo*);
- “**excessive greed**” (*visama,lobha*) or “neurotic desire,” as excessive greed by way of consuming things (*paribhoga,yuttetu pi ṭhānesu atibalava,lobho*, in other words, unbridled materialism and consumerism); and
- “**deviant conduct**” (*micchā,dhamma*) as homosexuality, ie, sex “between men and men, women with women.”¹⁰¹ (DA 3:853)¹⁰²

What is said here and what not? Firstly, the tone here is not judgemental but *observational*: this is what is to be expected of crowded living conditions. Secondly, it is not eschatological (a doomsday prophecy) but a clear warning of what we are capable of if we degenerate into *crowded* living and thinking.

“**Abnormal lust**,” exemplified by acts of incest, reflects a social environment where family relationships are weak or dysfunctional, and respect (not to say love) for seniority and elders have broken down. This is not to advocate that a strict system of respect for age and status is a basis for moral conduct. Indeed, where social relationships are traditionally based on age and status often allows those with age or status to abuse lesser members, and such wrongs remain unaddressed, often silenced by “respect” and shame. A healthy social relationship requires some social distance and emotional space, meaning a respect for the bodies and minds of others. This is, in fact, the essence of the five precepts.¹⁰³

“**Excessive greed**” is best understood here as unbridled materialism and consumerism in an urbanized society where there is such a level of economic specialization that almost any product or service is available if you can pay for it. Such a situation functions best with the use of *money*, where almost any product or service, including religious ones, can be bought and sold. When a society is flooded by an abundance or availability of a wide range of goods and services, wholesome and unwholesome, we begin to *collect* them. Collecting what we desire is not helpful when the reality is that it is impossible or unlikely for us to *enjoy* them. At the same time, there are those who are deprived of basic needs and could benefit from them. Hence, the meaningfulness of charity and compassion: helping the less fortunate and being kind to them.¹⁰⁴

“**Deviant conduct**” is glossed by the Commentaries as “homosexuality,” the sexual attraction between or amongst those of the same sex. Interestingly, male homosexuality seems to be the norm in the ancient Indian texts. Indeed, the beauty and power of the male body is regarded as the norm. Ancient India was essentially a male-centred and patriarchal society.¹⁰⁵ Where homosexuality is *narcissistic*, one loving one’s own sex, the pathology is at its worst. While heterosexual love flowers and fruits in a common love and bond of having children, homosexual relationships, as a rule, do not bear such benefits.

Hence, a homosexually inclined person is caught in the rut of seeking self-sameness, of self-love and same-sex love. Perhaps, where a homosexual couple is bonded by a higher task or ideal, they are likely to

¹⁰¹ See **Sexuality** = SD 31.7 (7).

¹⁰² See **Saññoga S** (A 7.48/4 :57-59) & SD 8.7 Intro (1).

¹⁰³ See **Veḷu,dvāreyya S** (S 55.7/5:352-356) = SD 1.5.

¹⁰⁴ **Abhijjhā,visāma.lobha**, as used in **Patta Kamma S** (A 4.61.8a/2:67 = SD 37.32) should be understood in this light.

¹⁰⁵ See eg John Powers, *A Bull of a Man*, Harvard Univ Press, 2009 esp 19 f, 239 f.

find their relationship more meaningful and purposive. The self-healing is enhanced, even fully effected, when we understand and accept that there are no homosexual *persons*, only homosexual *feelings*.

5.2 THE FIVE DOMESTIC HINDRANCES. The Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta narrative is subtly coloured by farce (situational humour) throughout: it is meant to *entertain* the audience. Here, the humour is entertaining as well as instructive, in other words, effective, because it invokes familiar themes, especially of the memories of ancient empires [2.2.1-2] and the realities of contemporary Indian imperialism [2.2.3-4]. This however is merely the packaging for a more serious message: that of the dangers of greed (*lobha*) or lust (*taṇhā*), the main unwholesome root-emotion that underpins the negative cycle of the Sutta narrative.

The Sutta depicts widespread social degeneration as climaxing in the three evils of abnormal lust, excessive desire and deviant conduct [§17.5]. We could actually summarize them in the second evil, that is “excessive desire,” that is, uncontrolled lust, unbridled greed or neurotic desire. In short, this is sensual desire, the mother of all mental hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*), those factors that tend to direct all our energies to the body, and away from mental development. The five hindrances, in other words, apply not only to the preparation for meditation, but also to the wholesome progress of lay life as a whole.

The Dīgha Commentary defines *visama,lobha* as excessive greed (or neurotic desire) by way of consuming things (*paribhoga,yuttesu pi thānesu atibalava,lobho*); in short, excessive materialism and consumerism) (DA 3:853). This definition fits very well into the context of **the Patta Kamma Sutta** (A 4.61) in regards to a lay-person’s progress. For, it says that when a householder (or lay person) lives under the power of these hindrances, he does what should not be done and fails to do what should be done.¹⁰⁶ This is a concise description of moral and economic decline on *an individual and domestic level*. The Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta, on the other hand, describes moral and economic decline on *a social level*.

Through **the Patta Kamma Sutta** (A 4.61), therefore, we can see *abnormal lust, excessive desire and deviant conduct* as being the five hindrances, which are as follows:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (1) excessive greed | (<i>visama,lobha</i>), | |
| (2) ill will | (<i>vyāpāda</i>), | |
| (3) sloth and torpor | (<i>thīna,middha</i>), | |
| (4) restlessness and remorse | (<i>uddhacca,kukkucca</i>), and | |
| (5) doubt | (<i>vicikicchā</i>). | (A 4.61.7-8/2:66 f) = SD 37.12. |

The Patta Kamma Sutta, furthermore, defines the lay follower’s success here and hereafter as comprising the attainments of faith, moral virtue, generosity, and wisdom. Here, the lay follower’s attainment of wisdom (*paññā sampadā*) is defined as the overcoming of these five “domestic hindrances.” Having overcome them, the lay person would be doing what should be done, and abstaining from what should not be done.¹⁰⁷ As such, we might call the five hindrances mentioned in the Patta Kamma Sutta as the layman’s hindrances to wisdom.¹⁰⁸

5.3 AVĪCI. In section **23b** of the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta, we find this remark by the Buddha: “Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 80,000 years, this Jambu,dīpa [India], will be crowded with people—it is Avīci, I say—just like a forest of reeds or a forest of rushes.” This is an *ironic* remark because the crowding, in the worldly or economic sense, means a vibrant and rich society, and yet *āvīci* is not a complementary term.¹⁰⁹

Eschatologically, *avīci* (“uninterrupted”) is said to be the most crowded of the hell states (*niraya*), sometimes called the “great hell” (*mahā,niraya*),¹¹⁰ and is the lowest point of the universe (NmA 2:425).

¹⁰⁶ A 4.61.7/2:67 = SD 37.12.

¹⁰⁷ A 4.61.8/2:67 = SD 37.12.

¹⁰⁸ See *Nīvaraṇa* = SD 32.1 esp (3.3).

¹⁰⁹ See T W Rhys Davids’ mystification over this: D:RW 23:73 n1.

¹¹⁰ DA 3:855; AA 2:256.

The word *avīci*, however, is mentioned *only twice* in the Nikāyas.¹¹¹ It does not appear in the list of hells given in in **the Sutta Nipāta** and **the Saṃyutta**,¹¹² but is found elsewhere.¹¹³ It is possible that the term is first used here in a literal sense, meaning “without a gap” (*a-vīci*), and later applied to the hells. In **the Visuddhi,magga**, for example, it means “disintegration.” (Vism 449).

This remark that the world of the wheel-turner Saṅkha’s time is crowded like Avīci [§23.2] is ironic because while it seems to be complimentary in a *worldly* sense, it is not really so in a *spiritual* sense. Regarding a similar situation, **the Paloka Sutta** (A 3.56) remarks that a time will come when our world becomes so crowded that it is “like Avīci” (“the waveless,” the most crowded of hells).¹¹⁴ Surely, this is an ominously futuristic vision of an overcrowded world.

Throughout early Buddhism, we see this tension between the *crowdedness* of family life and society, and the *openness* of renunciation and the wandering forest monk’s life. In the early years of the Buddha’s ministry, it is the spaciousness of the spiritual life that draws insightful people away from the crowdedness of worldly life. One of the most famous passages that show the resolution of this tension between the world and the spirit, is found in the youth Yasa’s first meeting with the Buddha, as recorded in the Vinaya:

Then Yasa, the son of family, when he was near the Blessed One, uttered the inspired saying (*udāna*): “Oh, what trouble indeed! Oh, what affliction indeed!”

Then the Blessed One said this to Yasa, the son of family:

“Here, Yasa, there is no trouble; here there is no affliction. Come, Yasa, sit down: I will show you the Dharma.”

Yasa Pabbajjā (Mv 1.7.4 = V 1:15) = SD 11.2(7)

We see this tension in the later years of monastic Buddhism reflected in the story of the arhat Piṇḍola Bhāra,dvāja. The tension now is between the two historical developments in itinerant eremitism (forest asceticism) and coenobitism (settled monasticism).¹¹⁵ **Reginald R Ray**, in his *Buddhist Saints in India* (1994), notes, “On the one side is Piṇḍola, the forest renunciant, for whom asceticism, intensive meditation, attainment, and magical powers are the norm. On the other is the monastic renunciation here defined by a communal lifestyle and behavioral purity.” (1994:158)

The overarching tension must always be between suffering and liberation, between samsara and nirvana. **The (Pañcāla,caṇḍa) Sambādha Sutta** (A 9.42) is instructive here, where it speaks of the “confined” (*sambādha*), that is, what crowds and clouds our lives up are “the five cords of sensual pleasures,” and its antithesis, the “opening” (*okāsa*), the breathing and growing space, is mental cultivation, especially the dhyanas, leading up to spiritual liberation.¹¹⁶

5.4 THE WHEEL-TURNER AND BUDDHIST KINGSHIP

5.4.1 Definition and duties of a Buddhist king

5.4.1.1 THE TWO WHEELS. On a worldly and practical level, the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta (D 26), is about the universal monarch (*cakka,vatti*) as a Dharma-based king (*dhamma,rāja*). What defines him is the “wheel-turner’s code of duties” (*cakka,vatti vatta*) [§5.1]. The Pali term is interesting, as it literally means “the turning of the wheel-turner.” The symbolism of the wheel here is very significant. A wheel, in its roundness, represents universality and the all-encompassing power of the wheel-turner, that is, his empire. A wheel, furthermore, is most useful when it turns properly and helps a vehicle to move. A wheel is not a wheel unless it turns, and to do so with wholesome benefits. This wholesomeness comes from the wheel-turner’s duties [5.4.3].

¹¹¹ Ie, here (D 26.23/3:75) = SD 36.10 & A 3.56/1:159, but it is often mentioned in the Comys (M 1:216, 4:109, 236×3; SA 2:12; SnA 1:41; DhA 1:127, 142, 148, 2:55, 61, 66, 67, 72, 200, 3:47, 64, 120, 151, 181, 209, 334, 416, 4:39, 42; UA 131; ItA 1:120; BA 46; J 5:271; PmA 1:297).

¹¹² Sn pp 121-127; S 1:154.

¹¹³ It 89 = V 2:203, & Dhs §1,281.

¹¹⁴ A 3.56/1:159) = SD 72.3.

¹¹⁵ See **Arhats who became bodhisattvas** = SD 27.6b (3.2.1).

¹¹⁶ A 9.42/4:449-451 = SD 33.2.

The Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta is unique in not only presenting an unprecedented series of seven wheel-turners [§§2-8]—seven here symbolically meaning “many”—but *both* wheels, the universal monarch and the Buddha, the world ruler and the world renunciant, appear at the same time. The rule is that only one wheel can appear at any one time: for, it is the destiny of such a “great man” (*mahā,purisa*) to either become a universal monarch (if he remains in the world) or as a world teacher (if he renounces the world).¹¹⁷ He is the universal captain, of whom there can only be *one*. On this clue, we could surmise that the Sutta was compiled at a time when the “great man” ideology has not been formulated or not yet finalized.¹¹⁸

Despite the fact that the Bodhisattva, as the “great man,” could choose between the two destinies of being a world ruler or a world renunciant, he *has only one destiny*, that of Buddhahood. After all, the Buddha has himself stated, for example, in the **Mā Puñña Bhāyi Sutta** (It 22), that he has been wheel-turner for “many hundreds of times.”¹¹⁹ In none of these births does he choose to become a wheel-turner, but is born so, but in his last birth, he is drawn to a great renunciation which leads to his spiritual awakening, so that he is a world teacher, the fully awakened Buddha who teaches universal liberation.

Understandably, the Bodhisattva, in his last life, has no interest whatsoever in becoming a wheel-turner. The Commentaries, in fact, record him as being revulsed at the idea: “He is called *bhaga-vā* because he vomitted out (*vami*)... He spat out the sovereignty and fame that are regarded as good fortune (*bhaga*), seeing them as no more than a gob of spit, he cast them aside... Therefore, the Tathāgata gave no thought to the glory of the wheel-turner...” (UA 24; cf BA 283).

Indeed, in spiritual terms, the destiny of the world ruler would pale away in the light of the world renunciant. It might even be said that it is the wheel-turner who *politically* prepares the world for the *spiritual* spread of the world renunciant’s teaching, as is evident in the case in the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta. For, the world monarch, after establishing an empire, renounces the world to join the world renunciant, the Buddha. No king or emperor in history has ever done this, but the point remains that Buddhism (as any world religion) would best prosper in a *pax cakkavattica* (universal peace established by the wheel-turner).¹²⁰

5.4.1.2 WHEEL-TURNERSHIP IS NOT HEREDITARY. As stated in the Sutta, a wheel-turner, as a rule, is *not* born, but his regular and proper execution of the wheel-turner’s duties is what makes him a wheel-turner [§4.2]. These duties are all centred around the Dharma. Thus, keeping to these duties, he is a legitimate wheel-turning king. In fact, the wheel-turner should not only be *fully Dharma-centred*, that is, keep the royal wheel of power (*āṇā,cakka*) turning, he must also keep the Dharma wheel (*dhamma,cakka*) turning.¹²¹ Hence, he is not only the protector of *the realm*, but also the defender of *the faith*.

In a Buddhist kingdom (as in southeast Asia) or where Buddhism was a state religion (as in ancient China), the king or emperor was the supreme power in the country: he was the head of both church and state. This is indeed still the case in Thailand, where, however, strategically the king, although a Buddhist, is regarded as *the head of all religions* in his realm. However, historically, where kingship has ceased to exist, as in Sri Lanka, the religious wheel still reigns supreme. As such, in Sri Lanka, the monks are, as it were, a power unto themselves to be reckoned with by the secular powers. Sadly, however, where sectarianism, materialism and militarism cast their shadows, the power that such a church or churches hold are

¹¹⁷ This prophecy is given in **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.1.5/1:88 f :: DA 249 f), **Mahā’padāna S** (D 14.1.31/2:16 :: DA 442-445), **Sela S** (Sn p106 :: SnA 2:449).

¹¹⁸ On the “great man,” see **Lakkhaṇa S** (D 30/3:142-179) & SD 36.9 (3).

¹¹⁹ It 22/1.3.2/14-16 = SD 2.11b.

¹²⁰ Emperor Liang (梁武帝 Liáng Wǔdì, 464-549): see **How Buddhism became Chinese** = SD 40b.1 (1.2.4).

¹²¹ On the terms *āṇā,cakka* and *dhamma,cakka*, see VA 1:10 (VAṬ 1:54); KhpA 95; MA 2:103, 278. For mention of the *cakka,vatti* and *āṇā,cakka* alone, see S 1:191 (SA 1:278); A 1:109 (AA 2:179); A 3:147-151 (AA 3:283); ThaA 3:48; DAṬ 1:381. See B Smith 1972; for other refs, see Collins 1998:473 f.

not very beneficial to the state and community in the long run. But where they are united and moved by the Dharma, they are truly a wholesome social and spiritual force.¹²²

5.4.1.3 THE WHEEL-TURNER'S DUTIES. On the level of mundane reality, being "Dharma-centred" also means "just" (*dhammika*), that is to say, the wheel-turner should provide "just care, shelter and guard" (*dhammika rakkh'āvaraṇa,gutti*) for his household, for the armies, for the kshatriya, the vassal chiefs, for brahmin households, the dwellers of the market-towns and country-side, for recluses and brahmins, and for animals and birds [§5.1].

From the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta, we can list a total of twelve duties of the wheel-turner, constituting the wheel-turner's code of duties (*cakka.vatti,vatta*), that is, as follows (put in somewhat modern terms):¹²³

- (1) the supremacy of the Dharma (*dhamm'ādhipateyya*), or supremacy of the law [§5.1];
- (2) providing just care, shelter and guard for his own household (the royal family) [§5.2];¹²⁴
- (3) providing just care, shelter and guard for his armed forces;
- (4) providing just care, shelter and guard for the nobility (including the civil service);
- (5) providing just care, shelter and guard for his colonial administrators;
- (6) providing just care, shelter and guard for the socioeconomic elite (the learned and the affluent, especially the propertied);
- (7) providing just care, shelter and guard for city-dwellers (especially business class) and the rural populace (the source of food and labour);
- (8) providing just care, shelter and guard for the monastic and religious communities;
- (9) providing just care, shelter and guard for living beings and nature (the environment);
- (10) not conducting himself "against the Dharma" (*adhamma*), ie, unjustly or immorally [§5.3];
- (11) providing welfare for those who are subject to him [§5.3]; and
- (12) from time to time consulting the wise and morally virtuous for the sake of high moral and spiritual standards in society [§5.4].

Clearly, these duties are those of an emperor or ruler with colonies, which reflects much of the ancient world of Buddhism. With the proper adjustments, such as replacing (5), on the point regarding colonial administrators, with "soft diplomacy" towards other countries and foreign guests, this code of wheel-turner's duties would work just as well, if not better.

5.4.1.4 THE DUTIES OF A RAJAH. The wheel-turner's code here [5.4.1.3] is clearly a list of sociopolitical duties. For, there is another list, perhaps a later one, found in **the Mahā Haṃsa Jātaka** (M 534), known as the 10 "royal duties or virtues" (*rāja,dhamma*), namely,

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| (1) generosity | (<i>dāna</i>), |
| (2) moral virtue | (<i>sīla</i>), |
| (3) self-charity or sacrifice | (<i>pariccāga</i>), |
| (4) integrity | (<i>ājjava</i>), |
| (5) kind gentleness | (<i>maddava</i>), |
| (6) austerity or self-restraint | (<i>tapa</i>), |
| (7) non-anger | (<i>akkodha</i>), |
| (8) non-violence | (<i>avihimsā</i>), |
| (9) patience | (<i>khanti</i>), |
| (10) non-hostility and law-abiding | (<i>avirodhana</i>). |

They are summarized in **the Mahā Haṃsa J** (J 534) in a *śloka* (a four-line stanza of eight syllables each), said to be spoken by the Buddha himself:

dānaṃ sīlaṃ pariccāgaṃ ājjavaṃ maddavaṃ tapaṃ

¹²² For an overview, see Piyasilo, *Buddhist Currents: A brief social analysis of Buddhism in Sri Lanka and Siam*, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia, 1992a. On the "two wheels," see B Smith 1972 & Collins 1998:473 f.

¹²³ For this listing, I have followed Prayudh Payutto, *Dictionary of Buddhism*, Bangkok, 1986:298 f.

¹²⁴ Nos 2-9 form a subset of its own [§5.2].

*akkodham avihimsaṇ ca**khantiṇ ca avirodhanam*

(J 534/5:378)

These are the qualities of a wheel-turner; they are what make him a true world monarch. In other words, just as the Buddha regards the Dharma above being himself,¹²⁵ the Dharma is above the wheel-turner, too. Hence, declares **the (Dhamma) Cakka,vatti Sutta** (A 3.14), the Dharma is “the rajah of just rajah (*dhammikassa dhamma,rañño rāja*).¹²⁶ Justice (*dhamma*), in other words, is the nature of things. It is the nature of the wheel-turner and the ideal society that he rules over.¹²⁷

5.4.2 Legitimization of power. The ideologies of the wheel-turner or universal monarch and world-order, as expounded in the the Pali discourses such as the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta (D 26) and the Aggañña Sutta (D 27),¹²⁸ deeply influenced and underpinned the realities of kingship and polity in southeast Asia. The three jewels—the Buddha, the Dharma (the teaching) and the Sangha (the monastic community)—are the religious sources of power which the kings use to *legitimize* their temporal power.

In Thailand, in the 15th century, and even earlier, the local kings—Trailok of Ayutthaya (r 1448-1488) and Tilok of Lanna (r 1441/2-1487)—used titles that evoke the universal monarch ideal. Their contemporary, Vangbuli (r 1442-1479-80), the first king of Laos, too, took the title of *chakkaphat* (Lao for *cakka,-vatti*).¹²⁹ In 1566, Setthathirat built the That Luang, the “great stupa,” in Vientiane to reinforce the Dharma-rajah (*dhamma,rāja*) ideology as the foundation of Lao kingship.

Like the *chedi* (stupa) Nakhon Pathom, Thailand, this great stupa was built over an ancient one said to have been built by the Indian emperor Asoka himself, the Buddhist prototype of ideal kingship. The idea of building the great stupas not only provided palpable monuments to the legitimacy and greatness of the king and his lineage, but was generally believed to generate a great store merit to *protect and preserve* the ruling house, just as those pious worshippers at these stupas sought blessings of the devas inhabiting these sanctuaries. Indeed, these stupas are often regarded as the axis mundi (celestial centre) of the kingdom.¹³⁰

Besides stupas, the ancient kings in southeast Asia also built and repaired monasteries and supported the monks therein, again as visible and living sources for merit to strengthen and sustain their royal power. In Thailand, various grades of royal monasteries still exist to this day, still supported by the Chakri royal house. A number of ancient kings have the epithet “buddha” in their title.¹³¹ The first Chakri king, Rama I, for example, is titled Phra Buddha Yodfa Chulalok (“the buddha of highest heaven, crown of the world”), a royal or political echo of the Buddha’s epithet as the “teacher of gods and men” (*sathā,deva,-manussānam*).

The word *cakka,vatti*, too, is often found in titles of some kings.¹³² Echoing the seven jewels of the wheel-turner, the Thai king has his “five royal objects of the regalia.”¹³³ Hence, we still see the influence

¹²⁵ On the Dharma being above even the Buddha, see **Gāraṇa S** (S 6.2/1:138-140) = SD 12.3 & **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16): the supreme worship (D 16.5.3/2:138) = SD 9 & the Dharma as teacher and refuge (D 16.2.26/2:100 f = 26.1/3:58, 26.27/77; S 22.43/3:42, 47.9/5:154, 47.13/5:163, 17.14/5:164).

¹²⁶ A 3.14/1:109 f = SD 72.10.

¹²⁷ **(Dhamma) Cakka,vatti S** (A 3.14), playing on the word *dhamma,rāja*, applies it to the Buddha himself: he is also the Dharma-rajah, as he places the Dharma above him (A 3.14/1:110) = SD 72.10. The Buddha is the Dharma-rajah in the sense that he “delights” (*ranjeti*) the people with the Dharma: *dhammena pare rañjetī ti rāja* (**Aggañña S**, D 27.21/3:93 = SD 2.19). The **(Dhamma) Cakka,vatti S** is one of the ancient texts that supports the idea of the “two wheels,” that of worldly power and of spirituality, ie, the state-church dichotomy of later Buddhist kingship: see eg Tambiah 1987:20.

¹²⁸ Respectively, D 26/3:58-79 = SD 36.10 & D 27/3:80-97 = SD 2.19.

¹²⁹ Volker Grabowsky, *Buddhism, power and political order in pre-twentieth century Laos*, in Ian Harris 2007:123.

¹³⁰ See Pothisane Souneth, “The Nidan Khun Borom: Annotated translation and Analysis” (PhD thesis, Univ of Queensland, Australia), 1996:258, 385 f, quoted in Grabowsky in Harris 2007:127.

¹³¹ See Peter Skilling, “King, sangha and brahmins: Ideology, ritual and power in pre-modern Siam” in Ian Harris 2007:102 f.

¹³² Op cit 2007:193 f

¹³³ The 5 *kakudha,bhaṇḍa* (กกุฎกัณฐ์, ka’.kut.tha.phan), “the royal regalia,” are (1) the crown (main symbol of kingship), (2) the sword (found in Tonle Sap, 1784, symbolising military might), (3) the royal staff (justice), (4) the

and power of the Indian Buddhist idea of kingship to this day, attesting to the enduring worldly influence of religion.

5.4.3 A literary evaluation of the Sutta

5.4.3.1 THE SUTTA AS A MORALITY PLAY. **The Neyy'attha Nīt'attha Sutta** (A 2.3.5-6) reminds us that whenever we read or reflect on a sutta, we need to distinguish between two levels of language, that is, the implicit and the explicit. Some teachings which refer to other things (like images and stories) are *implicit*, that is, the meaning needs to be teased out (*neyy'attha*). Teachings which are *explicit* are those that point directly to the true reality, so that their meaning is already drawn out (*nīta'attha*).

The Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta must be read on these two levels. The first thing that strikes us is that the Sutta is a great story, and is best enjoyed like a morality play, complete with irony, parody and humour, which are common in such long discourses of the Buddha.¹³⁴ However, there is a serious undertone: to this *explicit* drama, which must surely have entertained the early Buddhist audience, as the morality plays did in mediaeval western Europe.

Even on a social level, the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta is instructive. The key Buddhist teachings on moral virtue and karmic responsibility underpin the Sutta narrative. Peter Gyallay-Pap, in his paper “Reconstructing the Cambodian polity: Buddhism, kingship and the quest for legitimacy” (2007) summarizes the social implications of this with these words:

In the Theravada Buddhist king, birth was replaced by the virtue of the *dhamma*, the law of nature to which the ruler was also subject. The post-Angkorian king was no longer a *devarāja*, but righteous ruler, or *dhammarāja*, a moral human being who, ruling in a personal way, was considered a father to his people, assuring their happiness by respecting the Buddhist laws (Gour 1965:23).¹³⁵ In the eyes of the common people to whom this new faith appeared to have a particular appeal, a king who did not adhere to the *dasarājadhama* was considered unworthy to rule and would lead his kingdom to ruin.
(P Gyallay-Pap, in Ian Harris (ed) 2007:77)

As far as we know it was only the emperor Asoka who had ruled his empire close to what is envisioned in the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta. The truth is that an effective monarch would be astute in adopting teachings and methods that would serve his purpose. So we do not really know to what extent the Sutta had actually influenced him in any way, although we do know that Buddhism was of historical importance in his empire. If we value Buddhism as a spiritual system, we would see it as being more than as a memorandum to influence the powers that be. **Collins** gives us a reality check when he says:

Indeed, if the *Sutta* were to be performed as a drama in modern dress I would have the king as a Mafia boss along with his sons and a crowd of hit-men, strolling calmly into opponents' territory and asserting his powers by carefully worded homilies on Catholicism and family values.

(1998:485)

The historical reality is that only powerful rulers who have established themselves can afford to show themselves to be magnanimous and benevolent (if they choose to). And when they do so, it must have to do with economic reasons: it is better to win the subjects' hearts than to quell rebellions and social disorder. For, the wheel-turner, too, much have the *power* not to use force on others. Ironically, this forceful power is hinted at in the Sutta: his thousand sons (leading their various armies) are the “subduers of alien

royal fan (gold) and fly-whisk (hair from the white elephant's tail), anmd (5) the royal slippers (gold). Another important royal regalia item is the nine-tiered white parasol, which hangs above the king in state: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarchy_of_Thailand#Royal_Regalia. The 5 objects of the Thai regalia have been defined and illustrated with a line drawing in the Royal Institute Dictionary (*Phochanānukrom chabap rājabanditya-sathān*), 1st ed (BE 2493 = 1950 CE) to date: <http://rirs3.royin.go.th/word1/word-1-a1.asp> (without illustration).

¹³⁴ See eg **Aggañña S** (D 27/3:80-97) = SD 2.19.

¹³⁵ C G Gour, *Institutions constitutionnelles et politiques du Cambodge*, Paris: Dalloz, 1965.

armies” (*para,sena-p,pamaddanā*), or alternately, “the crushers of foreign armies.” Understandably, the wheel-turner might not have to fight, because the fighting is being effectively done *for* him.

5.4.3.2 SOCIAL DECLINE AND SOCIAL PROGRESS. The wheel-turner’s right and power, however, do not come from the divine wheel jewel itself. For, it is not a fetish; it has no power that the wheel-turning draws from. Indeed, it is the wheel-turner’s “turning” (*vatta*) that invokes the advent of the divine wheel jewel. The wheel jewel, in other words, arises through the moral and social virtue of the wheel-turner.

The defining qualities of the the wheel-turner, as we have seen [5.4.1.3], consists in the 12 duties of the wheel-turner (*cakka.vatti,vatta*). These are his social and economic duties, which when properly performed would ensure the realm’s peace and prosperity. However, the wheel-turner is himself morally virtuous, that is, he observes the uposatha [§5.6], which entails his keeping the eight precepts, which are basically an extended version of the fundamental five precepts, with the addition of the observing of celibacy and limiting solid food to only the proper time (between dawn and noon). The purpose of this is moral restraint as the basis for *mental cultivation* or meditation.

The wheel-turner, then, is an exemplar of moral integrity, who admonishes all his subjects, too, to keep to the five precepts [§6A]. In the section of the Sutta dealing with social decline and anomie, the causes are given as the progressive breakdown in the ten courses of wrong conduct (*akusala kamma,patha*) [§§9.1-21.3]. Conversely, social growth and the golden age are attributed to the progressive practice of the ten wholesome course of action (*kusala kamma,patha*) [§§21.4-24].

As far as a wheel-turner is concerned, we can say that these are the qualities, the wholesome ones, that define him. There is another set known as the ten royal virtues (*dasa,rāja,dhamma*) or duties of a ruler, given in **the Mahā Haṃsa Jātaka** (J 534), spoken by the king of Kāsī, as follows: giving (*dāna*), moral conduct (*sīla*), self-sacrifice (*pariccāga*), integrity (*ajjava*), gentleness (*maddava*), austerity (*tapa*), non-anger (*akkodha*), non-violence (*avihiṃsā*), patience (*khanti*) and non-opposition (to the will of the people) (*avirodha*) (J 534/5:378). Apparently, these virtues are those of an ordinary king, that is, one who is not a wheel-turner, as such qualities are implicit in the wheel-turner’s code [5.4.1.3].

5.4.3.3 THE SUTTA AS A PARABLE. The dramatic watershed of the Sutta narrative is in **§§9-13**, telling us how the king at first fails to perform the wheel-turner’s duties. His efforts to redress the situation only aggravate it. Despite the king’s good intentions, he fails to keep to his royal duties, and rules the country “according to his own ideas” (*so sa,maten’eva sudam janapadam pasāsati*) [§9.1]. His actions (we are not told whether they are unintentional or well-intentioned), bring about negative consequences.

In the next few sections [§§14-18], the situation deteriorates, each generation being marred by a growing number of moral vices, the evils of the fathers visiting their children, as it were. This is of course, bad karma, building itself up, generation after generation. This causal sequence reminds us of the cycle of dependent arising (*paṭicca,samuppāda*), how previous unwholesome states become the conditions for the subsequent states, leading to suffering.¹³⁶

In **§9a** the king is reminded that he has not been keeping to wheel-turner’s code. In fact, this eighth king is simply referred to as a “head-anointed kshatriya rajah” (*rājā...khattiya muddhābhisitta*), not a wheel-turner. In monastic terms, he would be the “first offender” (*ādi,kammika*), who brought on the whole sad sequence of degeneration. Technically, the first offender (especially since he acknowledges his offence), is not subject to any punishment. Indeed, here, the general social decline is itself punishment not only for the king, but for all under him, too.

The parable is clearly a lesson for the monastics: if they, like the eighth king—who does not keep to ways of “the fathers”—that is, do not practise meditation, the consequences would be disastrous. Indeed, they are not to learn from anyone else or anything else, except the way of the fathers, the true Dharma, so that they are the true heirs of the Dharma. We find a similar theme in **the Aggañña Sutta** (D 27), where the brahmins are said to have forgotten the past, so that they become class-conscious materialistic and misguided priests, instead of becoming society’s moral pillars.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ See **Dependent arising** = SD 5.16. See Collins 1982:106 &n6.

¹³⁷ D 27/3:80-97 & SD 2.19 (6).

5.4.3.4 FARCICAL CYCLES. If we closely study early discourses dealing with social issues, such as the Cakka.vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta (D26) and the Aggañña Sutta (D 27), we often see a subtle and sustained use of humour. The Aggañña Sutta, for example, employs Vinaya terms and style in describing how the primordial beings evolved from ethereal beings into flesh-and-blood humans.¹³⁸ We see a similar literary device of humour being used in the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta. Specifically, it presents the moral decline and moral growth as a farce, that is, a light, humorous play in which the plot depends upon a skillfully exploited situation rather than the development of character,

The farcical tool is the ten unwholesome courses of action (*dasa akusala kamma,patha*) [§§9a-21.3] rearranged as they are uimagined to arise. They are properly listed as follows: (1) killing, (2) stealing, (3) sexual misconduct, (4) lying, (5) harsh speech, (6) slander, (7) frivolous chatter, (8) covetousness, (9) ill will, and (10) wrong view. Nos 1-3 are unwholesome *bodily* actions, nos 4-7 *verbal* actions and nos 8-10 mental actions. The Sutta's farcical development can be summarized as follows:

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Unwholesome courses of action</u>	<u>Life-span</u>
§§9a-11b	(2) <i>stealing</i> 1 st & 2 nd thieves given financial aid	80,000 years
§12c-13	(1) <i>killing</i> : 3 rd thief executed; stealing grows	80,000 years
§§13-14a	beauty decline; killing is widespread	40,000 years
§§14b-15b	(4) <i>lying</i> : beauty declined further	40,000 years
§§15b-16a	(6) <i>slander</i> : some beautiful, some ugly	20,000 years
§§16b-17a	(3) <i>sexual misconduct</i> : the ugly coveted the beautiful	10,000 years
§17b	(5) <i>harsh speech</i> & (7) <i>idle chatter</i>	5000 years
§17c	(8) <i>covetousness</i> & (9) <i>ill will</i>	2500 years (some 2000)
§17d	(10) <i>wrong view</i>	1000 years (some 500)
§17e	abnormal lust, excessive desire, deviant conduct	500 years
§17f	disrespect towards all elders and the holy life	250 years (some 200)
§18b	beauty declines further	100 years
§19-21c	life-span at its shortest; widespread immorality & war	10 years

After the situation hits the worst level, it begins to change for the better. No one is to be blamed (if anyone, it would be the king who breaks protocol); the nature of society is such. Then, people tire of war, and stop killing (the first precept and the first of the ten wholesome courses of action), and so the wholesome cycle begins. With the progressive practice of the ten wholesome courses of action, human life-span, too, grows *pari passu* [§§21.4-23.1]. When the human life-span is 80,000 years, there arises the wheel-turner Saṅkha at Ketu,mati [§24], and amongst them, too, arises the Buddha Metteyya [§25], under whom Saṅkha will renounce [§26]. The two wheels [5.4.1.1] have become one, as it were.

The farcical tale comes in two cycles: *the negative cycle*, emulating dependent arising of widespread suffering [§§9.1-21.3],¹³⁹ and *the positive cycle*, that of dependent ending¹⁴⁰ of the ten wholesome courses of karma, climaxing in the advent of Metteyya [§§21.4-26]. The whole farce ends on a serious note that the Sutta opens with: the monks are to practise the four satipatthanas [§27], with which comes the five spiritual blessings [§28.1], which in turn outshine all the benefits of a wheel-turner, since they will give us the merit, that is, the spiritual power, to free ourselves from Māra's power [§28.2].

5.4.3.5 LESSONS TO BE LEARNT. While the Aggañña Sutta (D 27) is a parable of a past golden age (the narrated past),¹⁴¹ the Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta (D 26) is a parable of the present golden age (the

¹³⁸ D 27/3:80-97 = SD 2.19.

¹³⁹ **Mahā,nidāna S** (D 15) gives an “dependent arising” cycle for the origins of social disorder, thus: “dependent on feeling, there is craving → seeking → gain → decision-making → desire and lust → attachment → possessiveness → avarice → safe-guarding → there arise various evil unwholesome state—taking up of the rod, taking up of the sword, conflicts, quarrels, disputes [strife], back-biting, harsh speech, false speech” (D 15.9/2:58 f) = SD 5.17.

¹⁴⁰ On the traditional presentation of dependent ending, see **Upanisā S** (S 12.23/2:29-32) = SD 6.12.

¹⁴¹ D 27/3:80-97 & SD 2.19 (7).

wheel-turner's realm; the narrated present), which in due course degenerates to its lowest point, before progressing again towards a new golden age of the future Buddha (the narrated future)

All these qualities of a ruler, whether a wheel-turner or an ordinary king, are part of the Sutta's mundane narrative, an implicit teaching. The monastic and informed lay audiences are familiar with all these terms, in their farcical context and brilliance. The lesson points to a higher reality, which is stated in the very end of the Sutta. When all these wholesome qualities are practised, and the social conditions are right, the future Buddha appears, and the wheel-turner renounces his wheel of power for the wheel of Dharma [§25]. While the wheel-turner's code of duties defines the wheel-turning monarch, it is the four focusses of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*) that define a good monastic [§27], whose benefits far outshine all the possessions and pleasures of the wheel-turner: for, the renunciant's blessing are both truly pleasurable and fully liberating [§28].

The Cakka,vatti Sīha.nāda Sutta then is a dramatic morality fable or a “parable” of decline and revival (to use Collins' term),¹⁴² which shows “the large-scale effect of keeping morality, and indicates how monks are to use this lesson” (D:W 603 n809). Through the meditators, the Buddha's voice still reaches all of us—monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, Buddhist or not—who tire of religion but love spirituality, who wish to see the liberating light within ourselves and as a community. The Cakka,vatti Sīha.nāda Sutta inspires us to work both ways.

— — —

The Discourse on the Lion-roar of the Wheel-turning King

D 26/3:58-79

1.1 Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed One was staying at Mātulā¹⁴³ in Magadha.

There the Blessed One addressed the monks,¹⁴⁴ “Bhikshus!”

“Bhante!” the monks answered the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

Self as refuge: the four focusses of mindfulness

1.2 “Bhikshus, **dwel with yourself as an island**, with yourself as refuge, with no other refuge—
dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge.”¹⁴⁵

And how does a monk dwell with himself as an island, with himself as refuge, with no other refuge.
And how, bhikshus, does a monk dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge?

Here,¹⁴⁶ bhikshus, a monk,

¹⁴² S Collins, “The Discourse on What is Primary (*Aggañña Sutta*),” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 18 1993c:302 (“parable of origins”) & 1998:481.

¹⁴³ The Buddha stayed in a forest grove (*vana,saṇḍa*) not far from this village, where he resorted for alms (DA 3:845).

¹⁴⁴ Comy: 20,000 in number (*vīsati,bhikkhu,sahassa,parivāro*, DA 3:845).

¹⁴⁵ *Tasmā-t-ih'Ānanda attā,dīpā viharatha attā,saraṇā anañña,saraṇā, dhamma,dīpā dhamma,saraṇā anañña,-saraṇā* (D 16.2.26/2:100 = 26.1/3:58, 26.27/77; S 22.43/3:42, 47.9/5:154, 47.13/5:163, 47.14/5:164): many of them at different venues and to interlocutors. Comy tr *dīpa* here as “island” (DA 2:496, 548, SA 2:268, 3:204). For discussion, see **SD 9** (6a).

- (1) having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world,
dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, observing the body in the body;
- (2) having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world,
dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, observing feelings in the feelings;
- (3) having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world,
dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, observing the mind in the mind;
- (4) having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world,
dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, observing dharmas in the dharmas.

That, bhikshus, is how a monk dwells with himself as an island, with himself as refuge, with no other refuge—dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge.¹⁴⁷

1.3 Keep to the pasture, bhikshus, the haunt of our ancestors [the range of our fathers].¹⁴⁸ Keeping to your pastures, the haunt of our ancestors,

Māra will not find access to you [not descend upon you], Māra will not find¹⁴⁹ you as an object of his consciousness.¹⁵⁰ Bhikshus, it is on account of undertaking wholesome mental states that this merit thus grows.¹⁵¹ [59]

Daḷha,nemi & the seven wheel-turning kings

2.1 DAḬHA,NEMI THE WHEEL-TURNER. In the past, bhikshus, there was a rajah named Daḷha,nemi [Firm-wheel], a wheel-turner [a universal monarch], Dharma-rajah [a just king], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and possessor of these seven jewels.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁶ This whole section as at §27, and is a well known pericope from **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22.1/2:290) and **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10.3/1:55). See nn there.

¹⁴⁷ This whole section up to this point is in **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16.2.6/2:101) = SD 9, but hereafter has instead: “Ānanda, those who now in my time or after me, would dwell with himself as an island, with himself as refuge, with no other refuge; dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge—they become the highest,¹⁴⁷ but, Ānanda, they must have the desire to learn [have desire for the training] (*ye keci sikkhā,kāmā ti*)”: see D 2:101/3:58, 77; S 3:42, 5:154, 163, 164.

¹⁴⁸ *Gocare bhikkhave, caratha sake pettike visaye*. Here the Buddha is adapting brahminical language, referring back to the 4 focusses of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), “Do not stray away from the focusses of mindfulness, the way of the Buddhas.” *Pettika* means “departed ones,” but here refers to the past Buddhas. Comy (DA 3:847) quotes **Sakunagghi S** (S 47.6), on the fable of how a quail who strays from her customary terrain can be caught by a hawk, but not so if she does not (S 47.6/5:146 f) = SD 81.2; see also **Sakunagghi J** (J 168/2:58 f); cf Miln 367 f.

¹⁴⁹ “Will not find” (*lacchati*), fut of *labhati* (“he gains, finds”).

¹⁵⁰ *Na lacchati māro otāraṃ, na lacchati māro ārammaṇaṃ*. *Otāra* = BHS *avatāra*, “descent.” Here, *ārammaṇa* (canonical sense) means “basis (of consciousness);” in the later comy sense, it mean “meditation object.”

¹⁵¹ *Kusalānaṃ, bhikkhave, dhammānaṃ samādāna,hetu evaṃ-idaṃ puññaṃ pavaḍḍhati*. See §28b which also refers to Māra. Comy on *evaṃ-idaṃ puññaṃ pavaḍḍhati* as “here the wholesome is twofold: that which brings rebirth, and that which ends rebirth” (*tattha duvidham kusalam vaṭṭa,gāmī ca vivaṭṭa,gāmī ca*),’ There is a wordplay on *vatta/vatti* (turning/turner) and *vaṭṭa/vivaṭṭa* (cycle/no cycle), the former refers to the person and his task, while the latter to samsara (rebirth) and nirvana: see §4b n. While the former refers to wholesome familial and social relationships, the latter, to the practice of satipatthana. The peak (*pariyosāna*) of rebirth in the human world is that of “the wheel-turner’s glory” (*cakka.vatti,sirīvi,bhava*), while what ends rebirth is “the attainment of the paths, the fruits and nirvana” (*magga,phala,nibbāna,sampatti*) (DA 3:847 f). Here, we find the usage of both *kusala* (usu used in ref to meditative actions or actions supportive of mental cultivation) and *puñña* (usu used in ref to lay-oriented actions like good rebirth, heavenly rewards etc). of course, they can also overlap. For a study, see **Beyond good and evil** = SD 18.7.

¹⁵² This and the rest of the section is said of the Bodhisattva if he had not renounced the world: see **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.1.5/1:88 f) = SD 21.3; **Mahā’padāna S** (D 14.31/2:16) = SD 49.8; **Lakkhaṇa S** (D 30.1.1.2/3:142) = SD 36.9; **Sela S** (Sn p106; cf SnA 450 = DA 1:250). For details, see **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17.1.7-17/2:172-177) = SD 36.-12; cf Miln 37 f; Divy 467.12-16. Interestingly, the epithet “head-anointed kshatriya rajah” (*rājā...khattiya muddhāvasitta*), which occurs twice in the stock phrase in **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 27.1.3.2/2:169 & 1.3.7/2:172), is omitted here, and also from the def of a wheel-turner in **Mahā’padāna S** (D 14), **Lakkhaṇa S** (D 30) & **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16.5.18/2:146 f) = 9; also omitted in **Lalita,vistara**, a Skt life-story of the Buddha in verse.

These are **the seven jewels**, that is to say:
the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the steward jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.¹⁵³

2.2 Now he had more than a thousand sons, brave, heroic in form, crushing alien armies.¹⁵⁴

Having conquered this earth bounded by the oceans, he ruled justly [by the Dharma],¹⁵⁵ with neither rod nor sword.¹⁵⁶

3.1 THE WHEEL FALLS. Then, bhikshus, after the passing of many years, many centuries, many millennia, he addressed a servant [a man]:

‘Good man, when you see that the divine wheel jewel¹⁵⁷ has descended, fallen to the ground, then you should tell me.’

‘Yes, your majesty,’ the servant answered the rajah Daḷha,nemi.

Then, bhikshus, the servant, after the passing of many years, many centuries, many millennia, saw the divine wheel jewel descending, falling to the ground.

Having seen this, the servant approached the rajah Daḷha,nemi. Having approached the rajah Daḷha,-nemi, he said this to him:

‘Your majesty, it should be known that the wheel jewel has descended, fallen to the ground.’¹⁵⁸

3.2 DALHA,NEMI RENOUNCES THE WORLD. Then, bhikshus, the rajah Daḷha,nemi summoned his eldest son, the prince, and said this to him:

‘Dear son, the divine wheel jewel, it seems, has descended, fallen to the ground. I have heard it said that when the divine wheel jewel of the wheel-turner has descended, fallen to the ground, he will not have much longer to live. Now I have enjoyed [60] human pleasures; it is time for me to seek divine pleasures.

Come, dear son, take over this earth bounded by the oceans.

As for me, having shaven off hair and beard, donning the saffron cloth, I wish to go forth from home into homelessness.’

Then, bhikshus, having well instructed his son in kingship, the rajah Daḷha,nemi shaved off his hair and beard, donned the saffron robe, went from home into homelessness.

And seven days after the sage-king had gone forth, the divine wheel jewel disappeared.¹⁵⁹

4.1 THE NEW MONARCH IS DISTRESSED. Then, bhikshus, a certain servant [man] approached the head-anointed kshatriya rajah.¹⁶⁰ Having approached, he addressed the head-anointed kshatriya rajah, saying thus:

¹⁵³ *Āgatāni kho tāta Ambaṭṭha amhākaṃ mantesu dvattiṃsa,mahā.purisa,lakkhaṇāni yehi samannāgatassa mahā,-purisassa dve’va gatiyo bhavanti anaññā: sace agāraṃ ajjhāvasati rājā hoti cakka,vatti dhammiko dhamma,rājā cātura-anto vijitāvī janapada-t,thāvāriya-p,patto satta,ratana,samannāgato. Tass’imāni satta,ratanāni bhavanti. Sey-yathīdaṃ cakka,ratanam hatthi,ratanam assa,ratanam maṇi,ratanam ithi,ratanam gaha.pati,ratanam parināyaka,-ratanam eva sattamam. See Ambaṭṭha S (D 3.1.5/1:88 f) = Mahāpadāna S (D 14.1.31/2:16 f) = Sela S (Sn p106; cf SnA 450 = DA 1:250). For details on the wheel-turner’s 7 jewels, see Mahā Sudassana S (D 17.1.7-17/2: 172-177); cf Miln 37 f; Divy 467.12-16.*

¹⁵⁴ *Paro,sahassam kho pan’assa puttā ahesum sūrā vīr’aṅga,rūpā para,sena-p,pamaddanā.*

¹⁵⁵ In brahmanical terms, *dhamma* (Skt *dharma*) refers to “class duties,” but in the Buddhist sense, it means “justice,” ie, in keeping with the Buddhist idea of kingship.

¹⁵⁶ *So imam pathaviṃ sāgara,pariyantam adaḍḍena asatthena dhammena abhivijiyā ajjhāvasati.* “With neither rod nor sword” (*adaḍḍena asatthena*), ie with the use of neither fear nor violence.

¹⁵⁷ “The divine wheel jewel” (*dibba cakka,ratana*): see Intro (2.3.1).

¹⁵⁸ *Yagghe, deva, jāneyyāsi, dibbam te cakka,ratanam osakkitam thānā cutan’ti.* The indecl *yagghe* is a voc addressing a superior person; hence is here tr as “your majesty.”

¹⁵⁹ Comy: Like the extinguishing of a lamp’s flame (*nibbuta,dīpa,sikhā*, DA 3:849). It is interesting that here, the old universal monarch, having renounced the world, is not recorded as becoming a buddha, but merely a “sage-king” (*rāj’isi*). In fact, the 32 marks is not mentioned here at all. On the prophecy of the twin destinies of one with the 32 marks, see Mahā’padāna S (D 14.31/2:16) = SD 49.8 & Lakkhaṇa S (D 30.1.1.2/3:142) = SD 36.9. On the significance of the omission of the 32 marks in Cakka,vatti Siha,nāda S, see Lakkhaṇa S (D 30) @ SD 36.9(2.1.1).

‘Your majesty, it should known that the divine wheel jewel has disappeared!’¹⁶¹

Now the head-anointed kshatriya rajah was distressed [dissatisfied] at the disappearance of the divine wheel jewel, and he felt [recognized] that distress.¹⁶²

He approached the sage-king,¹⁶³ and having approached, said:

‘Your majesty, it should known that the divine wheel jewel has disappeared!’

4.2 THE WHEEL ARISES THROUGH MORAL CONDUCT. Bhikshus, when this was said, the sage-king then said this to the head-anointed kshatriya rajah:

‘Dear son, be not distressed at the disappearance of the divine wheel jewel, and do not feel any distress!’

For, this divine wheel jewel is *not* inherited¹⁶⁴ from our ancestors [our fathers]. Come now, dear son, keep to the noble wheel-turner’s code of duties [turn the turning of the wheel-turner]!¹⁶⁵

4.3 If you, having done the noble wheel-turner’s duties, on the observance day, the fifteenth,¹⁶⁶ having washed your head and gone to the roof-terrace of the royal palace,¹⁶⁷ for the observance¹⁶⁸—it is possible that the divine wheel jewel might appear with its thousand spokes, rim and hub, and complete in all aspects.’ [61]

5.1 THE NOBLE CODE OF THE WHEEL-TURNER’S DUTIES. ‘But what, your majesty, is **the noble wheel-turner’s duties**?’¹⁶⁹

‘Therefore, dear son,¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁰ “The head-anointed kshatriya rajah” (*rāja...khattiya muddhābhisitta*), ie, he is only enthroned by the traditional anointing ceremony (*abhiseka*), and is not yet a wheel-turner. On the significance of this term, see **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17) @ SD 36.12 (1.2).

¹⁶¹ *Yagghe, deva, jāneyyāsi, dibbam cakka,ratanam antarahitan’ti.*

¹⁶² *Atha kho, bhikkhave, rājā khattiyō muddhābhisitto dibbe cakka,ratane antarahite anattamano ahosi, anattamanatañ ca paṭisaṃvedesi.* This is a nuanced sentence, hinting at the presence a negative mental state in the prince, and that he is affected (*paṭisaṃvedesi*) by it. *Paṭisaṃvedesi*, 3 sg aor of *paṭisaṃvedeti* = *paṭisaṃvediyati*, “he feels.” Here it takes on a special sense of “perceives, recognizes” (BHSD: *pratisaṃvedayati*). Comy elaborates it as *jānāpēsi*, “he made it known” (DA 849); PvA 6 (Be *paṭisaṃvedesi* for Ce *paṭivedesi*). Note that he still lacks self-confidence, and needs to consult his father. Further, see Collins 1998:603 n7.

¹⁶³ Ie his father, the erstwhile wheel-turner, Daḷha,nemi.

¹⁶⁴ In other words, it is the result of past good karma [2.3.0].

¹⁶⁵ *Na hi te, tāta, dibbam cakka,ratanam pettikam dāyajjam. Ingha tvam, tāta, ariye cakka.vatti,vatte vattāhi.* “Keep to the noble wheel-turner’s code of duties” (*ariye cakka.vatti,vatte vattāhi*), lit “turn the noble turning of the wheel-turner.” The *ariya cakka.vatti,vatta* is his rules of conduct and duties, def in §5a. The old king’s advice means simply, “Conduct yourself wholesomely as I have done, and earn the wheel.” There is a wordplay on *vatta*: see §1c n. The word “noble” (*ariya*) here has both the sociopolitical sense of his class (a kshatriya) and the spiritual sense of what is right and good in the Buddhist sense. On how the wheel-turner Mahā Sudassana conducts himself, see **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17.2/2:186) = SD 36.12.

¹⁶⁶ “This observance day, the fifteenth” (*tad-ah’uposathe pañnarase*). A strong hint is thrown here that sovereignty is neither a birthright nor a divine right, but the king’s moral worth. On the proper observance itself, see **(Tad-ah’) Uposatha S** (A 3.70/1:205-215) = SD 4.18.

¹⁶⁷ *Upari,pāsāda,vara,gato*, here *vara* (“best”) is tr as “royal,” a common phrase: V 1:345,23, 4:112,2, 158,15; **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2.1.2/1:47,8) = SD 8.10; **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17.1.7/2:172,15×2) = SD 36.12; **Pāyāsi S** (D 23.9/2:325,8) = SD 39.4; **Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda S** (D 26.5/3:61,24+30) = SD 36b.10; **Mahā Gosīṅga S** (M 32.6/1:213,28) = SD 44.12; **Makhā Deva S** (M 83.13/2:79,11) = SD 60.8; **Bāla Paṇḍita S** (M 129.34/3:172,15×2) = SD 2.22; **(Piya) Mallikā S** (S 3.8/1:75,3+14 = U 5.1/47,4+14) = SD 38.7; VA 4:880 (def); DA 1:140 (def), 2:517; MA 2:254 (“7- or 9-storied”), 4:214; SA 3:21; AA 1:292, 316, 451; KhpA 172; SnA 1:278; UA 273 (def); CA 55; PvA 75, 105,25, 216, 279. See PED: *vara*!

¹⁶⁸ Cf Ajāta,sattu in the opening of **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2.1/1:47) = SD 8.10.

¹⁶⁹ *Cakka.vatti,vatta*, lit, “the turning of the wheel-turner,” meaning his duties [5.4.1.3] that invoke the Dharma as the source of his legitimate power [5.4.2].

¹⁷⁰ *Tenahi tvam tāta, dhammam yeva nissāya dhammam sakkaronto dhammam garukaronto dhammam mānento dhammam pūjento dhammam apacāyamāno, dhamma-d,dhajo dhamma,ketu dhamm’ādhipateyyo dhammikaṃ rakkh’āvaraṇa,guttiṃ saṃvidahassu anto,janasmiṃ.*

depending only on	the Dharma	<i>dhammaṃ yeva nissāya,</i> ¹⁷¹
honouring	the Dharma	<i>dhammaṃ sakkaronta,</i>
giving priority to	the Dharma	<i>dhammaṃ garu, karonta,</i>
esteeming	the Dharma	<i>dhammaṃ mānenta,</i>
venerating	the Dharma	<i>dhammaṃ pūjenta,</i>
serving	the Dharma	<i>dhamma apacāyamāna,</i>
taking the Dharma	as your flag	<i>dhamma-d, dhaja,</i>
the Dharma	as your banner	<i>dhamma, ketu,</i>
the Dharma	as supreme	<i>dhammādhipeyya,</i>

5.2 provide just care, shelter and guard¹⁷²

for your household	<i>anto, jana;</i>
for your armies	<i>bala, kāya;</i>
for kshatriyas (nobles)	<i>khattiya;</i>
for the vassal lords	<i>anuyutta;</i> ¹⁷³
for brahmin housemasters	<i>brāhmaṇa, gahapatika;</i> ¹⁷⁴
for the market-towns and country-side dwellers	<i>negāma, jānapada;</i>
for recluses and brahmins	<i>samaṇa, brāhmaṇa;</i> ¹⁷⁵ and
for animals and birds	<i>miga, pakkhī.</i>

5.3 My son, do not conduct yourself unjustly towards those you have conquered.

And, my son, to the poor that you have conquered, provide them with financial support.¹⁷⁶

5.4 LEARNING FROM THE WISE. And, my son, the recluses and brahmins who are without intoxication or heedlessness, but are devoted to patience and amenability, each one taming himself, each one calming himself, each one quenching himself¹⁷⁷—when they approach you, you should question and counter-question them, thus:

¹⁷¹ There is wordplay here: *dhamma* in connection the the king would means his royal “duties fitting his station,” but it also has the pregnant sense of “the truth, true teaching, proper practice,” ie Dharma in the Buddhist sense, as is evident later [§§27-28].

¹⁷² *Dhammikam rakkh'āvaraṇa, guttiṃ saṃvidhahassu:* see Vin 2:194; D I.61; M 2:101; J 4:292. Comy explains as follows: “**care**” (*rakkha*) means the practice of patience etc, as exemplified by the statement, “guarding others, one guards oneself” (*param rakkhanto attānaṃ rakkhatī*, ie by way of patience, non-violence, a lovingkind mind, and compassion, or *khanti, avihimsā, metta, citta, anudayatā*) (**Sedaka S**, S 47.19/5:169); “**shelter**” (*āvaraṇa*) is the providing of security of dwelling, clothing and houses (*nivāsana, pārupana, geh'ādīnaṃ nivāraṇā āvaraṇaṃ*); “**guard**” (*gutti*) guarding for the sake of warding off such calamities as robbers, etc (*cor'ādi, upaddava, nivāraṇ'atthaṃ gopāyanā gutti*; cf AA 2:179) (DA 3:850).

¹⁷³ *Anuyutta*, ie those kings or chieftains that he (as *cakka, vatti*) has conquered: see §6a etc.

¹⁷⁴ “Housemasters,” *brāhmaṇa, gahapatike* (**M 50.12/1:334, 12 etc; M 60.2/1:400, 30; A 3.14/1:110, 1, 8.86/4:340, -26; U 7.9/78, 8; It 4.1.8/111, 13; J 1:83, 12/1:152, 52/1:267; PvA 22**), as a rule, a karmadharaya (descriptive cpd), not a dvandva (as taken by Dhammapāla, UA 377 f & PED; see UA:M 998 n258 & Vv:M 671), invariably a collective term, never an individual, ie, heads of the landed community in a brahmin village (*brāhmaṇa, gāma*) or fiefs (*brahma, deya*) as a whole. Also in phrasal combination of *khattiya, brāhmaṇa, gaha, patika* (**D 25.10/3:44, 4, 13/3:46, 33, 26.5/3:61, 8; A 2.4.7/1:66, 8**), where in the last—**Kāma, rāga Vivāda S** (A 2.4.7)—we have *gaha, patika* (“housemaster”) by itself, who, strictly speaking, are “brahmin housemasters” (see SD 84.9). This classification is based on land-ownership (ie their economic function), who nonetheless still identified with the larger priestly class. As such, individually, they (such as Kūṭa, danta, Caṅkī, etc) are still referred to simply as *brāhmaṇa*. The word *gaha, patika*, “housemaster,” is glossed as “a householder who is the elder of only a single house” (*gehassa pati eka, gaha, matte jetṭhako*, DA 1:171; Nc 342; PvA 39), but they are all addressed as “houselords” (*gaha, patayo*), eg **Apaṇṇaka S** (M 60.3+4/1:401) = SD 35.5. Cf *gaha, pati*, “houselord.” See Chakravarti, *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism*, 1987:72 f.

¹⁷⁵ Here, *brāhmaṇa* refers to the priestly community, the priesthood, as against the *samaṇa* (the recluses).

¹⁷⁶ *Ye ca te tāta vijite adhanā assu tesaṃ ca dhanam anuppadeyyāsi.*

¹⁷⁷ *Ye ca te tāta, vijite samaṇa, brāhmaṇā mada-p, pamādā paṭiviratā khanti, soracce niviṭṭhā eka, mattānaṃ damenti, eka, mattānaṃ samenti, eka, mattānaṃ parinibbāpentī.*

“What, bhante, is wholesome, what is unwholesome?
 What is blameworthy, what is not blameworthy?
 What should be associated with, what should not be associated with?
 Doing what is for our good and happiness for a long time?”

Having listened to them, you should avoid the unwholesome, and you should undertake what is wholesome.¹⁷⁸

5.5 This, my son, is the noble code of the wheel-turner’s duties.’

Bhikshus, the head-anointed kshatriya rajah said, ‘Yes, your majesty,’ to the sage-king.

5.6 THE DIVINE WHEEL APPEARS. Having listened to the duties of the noble wheel-turner, he followed it, that is, on the observance day, the fifteenth, having washed his head and gone up to the roof-terrace of the royal palace.¹⁷⁹

On that account, the divine wheel jewel appeared with its thousand spokes, rim and hub, and complete in all aspects.

Having seen it, this occurred to the head-anointed kshatriya rajah,

‘I have heard that when, on the observance day, the fifteenth, a head-anointed kshatriya rajah, having washed his head and gone up to the roof-terrace of the royal palace, had kept the observance, and the divine wheel jewel appeared with its thousand spokes, rim and hub, and complete in all aspects, then that king was a wheel-turner. **[62]**

Surely I’m a wheel-turner!’¹⁸⁰

6 THE WHEEL-TURNER’S HORSE-SACRIFICE.¹⁸¹ Then, bhikshus, the head-anointed kshatriya rajah, having risen from his seat, having arranged his upper robe to one shoulder, taking a pitcher in his left hand, and sprinkled **the wheel jewel** with his right hand, saying,

‘Turn, good wheel jewel! Conquer, good wheel jewel!’¹⁸²

(A) THE EAST. Then, the wheel jewel rolled to the eastern quarter, and the wheel-turner followed it with his fourfold army.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁸ Rhys Davids (D:RD 3:62) is clearly mistaken in translating here that it is the king who advises the holy men! The truth is actually the reverse. Others who had used RD’s tr (T O Ling, *The Buddha’s Philosophy of Man*, 1981: 117; M Walshe, *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, 1987:397) egregiously repeated the same error—a hazard for those who try to “revise” others’ sutta translations without checking the Pali. See Collins 1998:484 n96.

¹⁷⁹ On how the wheel-turner Mahā Sudassana does this, see **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17.7/2:172) = SD 36.12.

¹⁸⁰ *Assaṃ nu kho ahaṃ rājā cakka,vattī’ti*. This is an optative structure expressing surprise, like when the Ugly Duckling realizes, “I am a Swan!” (S Collins 1998: 484).

¹⁸¹ “Horse-sacrifice” (*aśva,medha*), the most important and complex of Vedic rituals, performed by a king to celebrate his glory. The ritual is described in detail in various Vedic writings, esp Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (SB 13.1–5). A hand-picked stallion was allowed to roam freely for a year under the protection of royal guards. If the horse entered a foreign country, its ruler had either to fight or to submit. If the horse remained uncaptured, it was brought back at the year’s end and publicly sacrificed in a fertility rite. The wandering horse was said to symbolize the sun’s orbit around the world, that is, the king’s power over the earth. On successful completion of the sacrifice, the king could assume the Skt title of *cakravartī* (wheel-turner). The ritual was believed to ensure the prosperity and fertility of the whole kingdom. The Buddha unequivocally condemns the horse sacrifice, which consequently seems to have suffered a decline. In its place, he proposes the *sassa,medha* (“rice for the wise”), ie, generosity and charity (SA 1:144). See **Pasenadi Yañña S** (S 3.9/1:75 f) & SD 22.11 Intro (1.2.2). On how the *aśva,medha* is performed, see Auboyer 1965:287-290.

¹⁸² *Pavattatu bhavaṃ cakka,ratanāṃ, abhivijjīnātu bhavaṃ cakka,ratanaṃ ti*. This and the foll sections [§§1.7.2-11] (on the Wheel Jewel) as at **Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda S** (D 26.6-7b/3:62 f) = SD 36.10 (except for the closing line) & parallel **Bāla Paṇḍita S** (M 129.35/3:172 f) = SD 2.22.

¹⁸³ “The fourfold army” (*catur-aṅga sena*), ie, foot-soldiers (infantry), horses (cavalry), elephants (artillery) and chariots (D 2:190 J 2:102 104 Vism 146 SnA 225 353 DhA 4:144; cf J 6:275). *Catur* is an etymological root of the modern word *chess*, and is the Malay word for “chess,” orig a favourite game of royalty in ancient India and Persia. In chess, the infantry, cavalry, elephants, and chariots, are represented respectively by pawn, knight, bishop, and rook. See H J R Murray, *A History of Chess*, Oxford, 1913.

In whatever region, bhikshus, that the wheel jewel stopped, the wheel-turner went there with his fourfold army.

The opposing kings of the eastern quarter approached the wheel-turner. Having approached the wheel-turner, they said this to him:

‘Come, maharajah! Welcome, maharajah! This is yours, maharajah! Instruct us, maharajah!’¹⁸⁴

The wheel-turner spoke thus:

‘You should not kill living beings.

Pāṇo na hantabbo.

You should not take the not-given.

Adinnaṃ nādātabbam.

You should not commit sexual misconduct.

Kāmesu micchā na caritabbā.

You should not speak falsehood.

Musā na bhāsitabbā.

You should not take intoxicants.

Majjāṃ na pātabbam.

And govern as you have done before.’¹⁸⁵

Yathā, bhuttaṃ ca bhuñjatha.

Then, bhikshus, the opposing kings of the eastern quarter became vassals of the wheel-turner. [63]

7.1 (B) THE SOUTH. Then, the wheel jewel rolled to the southern quarter, and the wheel-turner followed it with his fourfold army.

In whatever region, bhikshus, that the wheel jewel stopped, the wheel-turner went there with his fourfold army.

The opposing kings of the southern quarter approached the wheel-turner. Having approached the wheel-turner, they said this to him:

‘Come, maharajah! Welcome, maharajah! This is yours, maharajah! Instruct us, maharajah!’

The wheel-turner spoke thus:

‘You should not kill living beings.

You should not take the not-given.

You should not commit sexual misconduct.

You should not speak falsehood.

You should not take intoxicants.

And govern as you have done before.’

Then, bhikshus, the opposing kings of the southern quarter became vassals of the wheel-turner.

(C) THE WEST. Then, the wheel jewel rolled to the western quarter, and the wheel-turner followed it with his fourfold army.

In whatever region, bhikshus, that the wheel jewel stopped, the wheel-turner went there with his fourfold army.

¹⁸⁴ One effective way to appreciate this otherwise parody-like statement, indeed, the whole Sutta itself, is to envision it as a morality play, where such actions are stylized gestures reflecting the basis for a utopia. See D:RD 3:63; S Collins 1998:484.

¹⁸⁵ This para is an abr form of the 5 precepts (*pañca, sīla*), which, together with a sixth: *yathā, bhuttaṃ ca bhuñjatha*, are also found verbatim at: **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17.1.9/2:173) = SD 36.12, **Cakka, vatti Sīha, nāda S** (D 26.-6/3:62, 63) = SD 36.10, **Bāla Paṇḍita S** (M 129.35/3:173) = SD 2.22. See PED: *bhutta*. It is also related to *bhojaka*, as in the commentarial term, *gāma, bhojaka*, “village chief, squire” (J 1:199, 2:134; MA 2:252; DhA 1:69): see Auboyer 1965:42-46. Apparently, the wheel-turner expects some moral standard from his subject-kings, while continuing to rule their kingdoms (cf Collins 1998:605 n12). The sentence *yathā, bhuttaṃ ca bhuñjatha* (D 2:173 = 3:62 63 3:64) is problematic: there is a wordplay (*śleṣa*) on the 2 forms of *bhuñjati* (“he enjoys”), ie (1) takes food, or (2) rule, govern (DPL; SED: 3 bhuj). A similar play (a pun) on *bhuñjati* is found in (**Devatā**) **Samiddhi S** (S 42/1.20/-1:8) = SD 21.4. Scholars have tr it in one of 2 ways: (1) “Take food in moderation” (D:W 281 = 398), or (2) “Rule (or govern) as you have done before” (Holder 2006:178); cf D:RD 3:64 n1. Comy notes that the wheel-turner neither demands tributes nor seizes wealth from the subject-kings (DA 2:622; MA 4:222). The point is that the wheel-turner does not dethrone the conquered kings, but *shares power with them* as his feudatory regents or vassals (*rāja anuyutta*). Collins remarks: “He does not depose the kings he defeats and instal someone else in their stead, which was the standard practice among Indian kings; nor does he intend to unseat them and collect taxes directly himself...all major kings or ‘emperors’ ruled through other intermediary members of the tribute-taking class” (1998:605). On *bhuñjati* = “he governs,” see **Vāseṭṭha S** (M 98.10(26)/2:196 = Sn 619b) = SD 37.1. See PED: *bhutta*.

The opposing kings of the western quarter approached the wheel-turner. Having approached the wheel-turner, they said this to him:

‘Come, maharajah! Welcome, maharajah! This is yours, maharajah! Instruct us, maharajah!’

The wheel-turner spoke thus:

‘You should not kill living beings.

You should not take the not-given.

You should not commit sexual misconduct.

You should not speak falsehood.

You should not take intoxicants.

And govern as you have done before.’

Then, bhikshus, the opposing kings of the western quarter became vassals of the wheel-turner.

(D) THE NORTH. Then, the wheel jewel rolled to the northern quarter, and the wheel-turner followed it with his fourfold army. In whatever region, bhikshus, that the wheel jewel stopped, the wheel-turner went there with his fourfold army.

The opposing kings of the northern quarter approached the wheel-turner. Having approached the wheel-turner, they said this to him:

‘Come, maharajah! Welcome, maharajah! This is yours, maharajah! Instruct us, maharajah!’

The wheel-turner spoke thus:

‘You should not kill living beings.

You should not take the not-given.

You should not commit sexual misconduct.

You should not speak falsehood.

You should not take intoxicants.

And govern as you have done before.’

Then, bhikshus, the opposing kings of the northern quarter became vassals of the wheel-turner.

7.2 Then, bhikshus, the wheel jewel, having conquered the ocean-bound earth, returned to the royal city [the capital], to the entrance to the wheel-turner’s inner palace, where it stood, as it were, fixed at its axis,¹⁸⁶ before the justice hall, shining forth on the the wheel-turner’s inner palace.¹⁸⁷

8.1 SIX OTHER WHEEL-TURNERS. Then, bhikshus, the second wheel-turner, too,...¹⁸⁸

Then, bhikshus, the third wheel-turner, too,...

Then, bhikshus, the fourth wheel-turner, too,...

Then, bhikshus, the fifth wheel-turner, too,...

Then, bhikshus, the sixth wheel-turner, too,...

8.2 THE SEVENTH WHEEL-TURNER. Then, bhikshus, the seventh wheel-turner, too, after the passing of many years, many centuries, many millennia, addressed a servant [a man]:

‘Good man, when you see the divine wheel jewel descending, falling to the ground, then you should tell me.’

‘Yes, your majesty,’ the servant answered the wheel-turner.

Then, bhikshus, the servant, after the passing of many years, many centuries, many millennia, saw the divine wheel jewel descending, falling to the ground.

Having seen this, the servant approached the wheel-turner. Having approached him, he said this to the wheel-turner: [64]

¹⁸⁶ *Akkh’āhata* (M 3:173,26; A 1:112,5), from *akkha*, “an axle” + *āhata*, “fixed,” pp of *āhanati*, “he hits, strikes; fixes,” ie, “fixed at the axle”; “axle-locked” (KhpA:Ñ 187). The meaning, I think, is that the wheel stands mid-air but still turning on its axis.

¹⁸⁷ *Atha kho tam bhikkhave cakka,ratanam samudda,pariyantam paṭhaviṃ ahivijinitvā tam eva rāja,dhāniṃ pac-cāgantvā rañño cakka,vattissa ante,pura.dvāre attha.karaṇa-p,pamukhe akkh’āhataṃ maññe aṭṭhāsi, rañño cakka,-vattissa ante,puram upasobhayamānam.*

¹⁸⁸ These *peyyālā* have been left as they are in keeping with the text, esp since they are essentially narrative and identical. the continuity of the account is unaffected, as it is.

‘Your majesty, it should be known that the divine wheel jewel has descended, fallen to the ground.’

8.3 Then, bhikshus, the wheel-turner addressed his eldest son, the prince, saying thus:

‘Dear son, the divine wheel jewel has descended, fallen to the ground. I have heard it said that when the divine wheel jewel of the wheel-turner has descended, fallen to the ground, he will not have much longer to live. Now I have enjoyed human pleasures; it is time for me to seek divine pleasures.

Come, dear son, take over this earth bounded by the oceans.

As for me, having shaven off hair and beard, donning the saffron cloth, I will go forth from home into homelessness.’

Then, bhikshus, having well instructed his son in kingship, the wheel-turner shaved off his hair and beard, donned the saffron robe, went from from home into homelessness.

And seven days after the sage-king had gone forth, the divine wheel jewel disappeared.

The eighth rajah & the global decline¹⁸⁹

9.1 THE EIGHTH RAJAH DOES NOT CONSULT THE SAGE-KING. Then, bhikshus, the servant [man] approached the head-anointed kshatriya rajah.¹⁹⁰ Having approached, he addressed the head-anointed kshatriya rajah, saying thus:

‘Your majesty, it should be known that the divine wheel jewel has descended, fallen to the ground.’

Now the head-anointed kshatriya rajah was distressed [dissatisfied] at the disappearance of the divine wheel jewel, and he felt that distress.¹⁹¹

He *did not* approach the sage-king to ask about the duties of the wheel-turner.

He ruled the country according to his own ideas;¹⁹² and ruling thus, according to his own ideas, the country did not prosper as it did under the ancient rajahs who followed the noble code of wheel-turner’s duties.

9.2 Then, the privy councillors [confidants], courtiers, accountants, chief ministers, treasury officials, chamberlains [door-keepers], and professional advisors,¹⁹³ approached the head-anointed kshatriya rajah, saying thus: **[65]**

¹⁸⁹ From here on [§§9-21] is an account of the conditions arising of social problems: see also **Aggañña S** (D 27, esp §§16-20/3:88-93) = SD 2.19, and **Vāseṭṭha S** (M 98, esp §§6-13/2:196 = Sn 594-656) = SD 37.1. See discussion in Payutto 1994:73-75. Other suttas that investigate the causal conditions behind social disorder are **Sakka,pañha S** (D 21), **Mahā Dukkha-k,khandha S** (M 13) and **Kalaha,vivāda S** (Sn 4.11). Despite their differences in formulation, they all come to the same conclusion: see **Dependent arising** = SD 5.16 (19.5).

¹⁹⁰ “Head-anointed kshatriya rajah,” *rājā khattiya muddhābhisitta*: this is what he known as throughout, not as a wheel-turner (*cakka,vatti*) [5.4.3.3].

¹⁹¹ *Atha kho, bhikkhave, rājā khattiyo muddhābhisitto dibbe cakka, ratane antarāhite anattamano ahoṣi, anatta-manatañ ca paṭisaṃvedesi*. This is a nuanced sentence, hinting at the presence a mental state in the prince, and that he is affected by it. As far as I know, no other translation has reflected this nuance. J J Holder mistranslates *paṭisaṃvedeti* as “made known” (2006: 178).

¹⁹² *So samaten’eva sudam janapadam pasāsati*. Comy glosses *samatena* as “by his own wisdom” (*samatenā ti attano matiyā*, DA 3:851), ie *samata* = *sa,mata*.

¹⁹³ “The privy councillors... professional advisors,” *amaccā pārisajjā gaṇakā mahāmattā anīkaṭṭhā dovārikā mantass’ājivino*. An *āmacca* is a colleague or confidant; in the king’s case, it would be someone close to him in administrative and other matters. It is likely that the *dovārika* is a chamberlain, rather than a common door- or gate-keeper, where *dvāra,pāla* obtains (J 1:352; Ap 44; Miln 155); perhaps *dovārika* has a broader sense that incl *dvāra,pāla*, too. The last, the “professional advisors” (*mantass’ājivī*, lit “those whose livelihood is *manta*”), says Comy, are the “wise chief ministers” (*paṇḍitā mahāmattā*) (DA 3:852). Hence, I take *mantā* to mean “wisdom, advice,” rather than “mantra”: cf “The word, ‘Mantra, mantra,’ too, means having well investigated with wisdom” (*mantā mantā’tipi pāṭho paññāya upaparikkhitvā upaparikkhitvāti attho*, DA 3:821). This clearly is a list of those who have direct access to and influence on the king.

‘Your majesty, you are ruling the country according to your own ideas; and ruling thus, according to your own ideas, the country does not prosper as it did under the ancient rajahs, following the noble code of wheel-turner’s duties.

Your majesty, there are ministers, courtiers, accountants, chief ministers, treasury officials, chamberlains and the professional advisors, here, amongst those you have conquered. We remember the noble code of the wheel-turner’s duties.

Come now, your majesty, ask us about the noble code of the wheel-turner’s duties! Being asked, we will explain it to you.

10.1 STEALING BECOMES WIDESPREAD. Then, bhikshus, the the head-anointed kshatriya rajah questioned the privy councillors [confidants], courtiers, accountants, chief ministers, treasury officials, chamberlains and the professional advisors, who had assembled, regarding the noble code of the wheel-turner’s duties.

On being asked, they explained the noble code of the wheel-turner’s duties.

10.2 THE FIRST THIEF. Having listened to them, he provided just care, shelter and guard; but he did not give financial support to the penniless, and in not providing financial support for those who needed it, **poverty** became widespread in the country.¹⁹⁴

When poverty was widespread, a certain person took by theft the not-given from another. The thief was caught and brought before the head-anointed kshatriya rajah, with the report:

‘This person, your majesty, took by theft the not-given from another.’

10.3 When this was said, bhikshus, the head-anointed kshatriya rajah said this to that person:

‘Is it true, O man, that you took by theft the not-given from another?’

‘It is true, your majesty,’ the man answered the head-anointed kshatriya rajah.

‘Why did you do it?’

‘I have no means of living, your majesty.’ **[66]**

10.4 Then, bhikshus, the head-anointed kshatriya rajah provided wealth for that man, saying,

‘O man, with this wealth, live, support your parents, support your children and women, set up businesses,¹⁹⁵ keep up alms-giving [dakshina] to recluses and brahmins for the sake of rising upwards to heaven, resulting in happiness, opening up heaven.’

‘Yes, your majesty!’ the man, bhikshus, answered the head-anointed kshatriya rajah.

10.5 Now, bhikshus, the people said:

‘Sirs, It seems that one who takes by theft the not-given from another are given wealth by the rajah!’

Hearing that, bhikshus, it occurred to them:

‘What now, let us, too, take by theft the not-given from another!’

11.1 THE SECOND THIEF. Then, bhikshus, a certain person took by theft the not-given from another.

The thief was caught and brought before the head-anointed kshatriya rajah, with the report:

‘This person, your majesty, took by theft the not-given from another.’

When this was said, bhikshus, the head-anointed kshatriya rajah said this to that person:

‘Is it true, O man, that you took by theft the not-given from another?’

‘It is true, your majesty,’ the man answered the head-anointed kshatriya rajah.

‘Why did you do it?’

‘I have no means of living, your majesty.’

11.2 Then, bhikshus, the head-anointed kshatriya rajah provided wealth for that man, saying,

‘O man, with this wealth, live, support your parents, support your children and women, carry on your work, keep up alms-giving [dakshina] to recluses and brahmins for the sake of rising upwards to heaven, resulting in happiness, opening up heaven.’

¹⁹⁴ Apparently, the king’s welfare efforts are not comprehensive enough, or more importantly, he neglects to seek the sage-king’s advice early, and by this time, the socioeconomic situation has become more complex. In other words, if the ruler neglects his Dhamma (duties and moral conduct), its negative consequences will follow.

¹⁹⁵ “Set up businesses,” *kammante payojehi*. This suggests an urbanized milieu with business enterprises, which could be further evidence for the Sutta’s lateness.

‘Yes, your majesty!’ the man, bhikshus, answered the head-anointed kshatriya rajah.

12.1 Now, bhikshus, the people said:

‘Sirs, it seems that one who takes by theft the not-given from another are given wealth by the rajah!’
Hearing that, bhikshus, it occurred to them:

‘What now, let us, too, take by theft the not-given from another!’

12.2 THE THIRD THIEF. Then, bhikshus, a certain person took by theft the not-given from another.

The thief was caught and brought before the head-anointed kshatriya rajah, with the report:

‘This person, your majesty, took by theft the not-given from another.’ **[67]**

When this was said, bhikshus, the head-anointed kshatriya rajah said this to that person:

‘Is it true, O man, that you took by theft the not-given from another?’

‘It is true, your majesty,’ the man answered the head-anointed kshatriya rajah.

‘Why did you do it?’

‘I have no means of living, your majesty.’

12.3 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT INSTITUTED. Then, bhikshus, it occurred to the head-anointed kshatriya rajah:

‘If I were to provide financial support to whomever has taken by theft the not-given from another, *this stealing would grow as a result*. What now if I were to put a complete and final end to this man—chop off his head!

12.4 Then, bhikshus, the head-anointed kshatriya rajah ordered his servants [men]:

‘In that case, sirs, bind this man’s arms firmly behind his back, shave his head clean, and lead him around to the sound of a harsh drum-beat, from street to street, from cross-road to cross-road, taking him out through the south gate, into the south of the city, to the execution ground—let his head be cut off!’

13 STEALING BECOMES WIDESPREAD. Now, bhikshus, the people heard thus:

‘Sirs, it seems that those who take by theft the not-given from others, the rajah would they would put a complete and final end to them—he has their heads cut off!’

Hearing this, it occurred to them:

‘What now if we were to have sharp weapons made, and having made them, we will take by theft the not-given from others, **[68]** we would they would put a complete and final end to *them*—let *us* cut off their heads!’

So they made sharp weapons, and having made them, committed acts of violent robbery upon villages, upon market towns, upon cities, and they committed highway robberies. From whomever they had taken by theft the not-given, they would put a complete and final end to them—they had their heads cut off.

14.1 HUMAN LIFESPAN HALVED. Thus, bhikshus, by not providing funds for the poor, poverty became widespread.

When poverty became widespread, stealing became widespread.

When stealing became widespread, armed violence became widespread.

When armed violence became widespread, life-taking became widespread.

When life-taking became widespread, the life-span of beings declined, their beauty declined, too.

For these humans whose life-span and beauty were declining, whose lifespan was **80,000 years**, that of their children was 40,000 years.

14.2 LYING. Now, bhikshus, amongst those humans whose life-span was **40,000 years**, a certain person took by theft the not-given from another.

The thief was caught and brought before the head-anointed kshatriya rajah, with the report:

‘This person, your majesty, took by theft the not-given from another.’

When this was said, bhikshus, the head-anointed kshatriya rajah said this to that person:

‘Is it true, O man, that you took by theft the not-given from another?’

‘No, your majesty!’ he said, consciously lying.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁶ *Sampajāna, musā abhāsi*, lit “fully aware of falsehood, he said.”

15.1 HUMAN LIFESPAN FURTHER HALVED. Thus, bhikshus, by not providing funds for the poor, poverty became widespread.

When poverty became widespread, stealing became widespread.

When stealing became widespread, armed violence became widespread.

When armed violence became widespread, life-taking became widespread.

When life-taking became widespread, lying became widespread. [69]

When *lying* became widespread, the life-span of beings declined, their beauty declined, too.

For these humans whose life-span and beauty were declining, whose lifespan was 40,000 years, that of their children was 20,000 years.

15.2 SLANDER. Now, bhikshus, amongst those humans whose life-span was **20,000 years**, a certain person took by theft the not-given from another.

Now, a certain man reported to the head-anointed kshatriya rajah, thus:

‘Your majesty, so-and-so took by theft the not-given from another,’ so speaking slander.

16.1 HUMAN LIFESPAN FURTHER HALVED. Thus, bhikshus, by not providing funds for the poor, poverty became widespread.

When poverty became widespread, stealing became widespread.

When stealing became widespread, armed violence became widespread.

When armed violence became widespread, life-taking became widespread.

When life-taking became widespread, lying became widespread.

When lying became widespread, slander became widespread.

When *slander* became widespread, the life-span of beings declined, their beauty declined, too.

For these humans whose life-span and beauty were declining, whose lifespan was 20,000 years, that of their children was 10,000 years.

16.2 Now, bhikshus, amongst those humans whose life-span was **10,000 years**, some beings were beautiful, and some were ugly.

And those beings who were ugly, covetous of those beings who were beautiful, misconducted themselves with the women of others.¹⁹⁷

17.1 HUMAN LIFESPAN FURTHER DECREASES. Thus, bhikshus, by not providing funds for the poor, poverty became widespread.

When poverty became widespread, stealing became widespread.

When stealing became widespread, armed violence became widespread.

When armed violence became widespread, life-taking became widespread.

When life-taking became widespread, lying became widespread.

When lying became widespread, slander became widespread.

When slander became widespread, sexual misconduct became widespread.

When *sexual misconduct* became widespread, the life-span of beings declined, their beauty declined, too.

For these humans whose life-span and beauty were declining, whose lifespan was 10,000 years, that of their children was 5,000 years.

17.2 Now, bhikshus, amongst those humans whose life-span was **5,000 years**, two things increased, that is, harsh speech and idle talk.

Bhikshus, with the increase of these two things, that is, the life-span of beings declined, and their beauty declined, too.

¹⁹⁷ *Tattha ye te sattā dubbannā, te vaṇṇavante satte abhijjhāyantā paresam dāresu cārittam āpajjimsu.* In the previous sentences, such as “some beings were beautiful, and some were ugly” (*ekidaṃ sattā vaṇṇavanto honti, ekidaṃ sattā dubbannā*) [§16.2] are given in the masculine gender, suggesting that the victimized are women. In that case, the “sexual misconduct” would refer more to the raping of beautiful women by ugly men (to whom the former are unlikely to be attracted), and to adultery where handsome men and women are concerned. On the other hand, the gender ref, although masc, refers to “people” in general.

For these humans whose life-span and beauty were declining, whose lifespan was [70] 5,000 years, that of some of their children was 2,500 years, and some 2,000 years.

17.3 Now, bhikshus, amongst those humans whose life-span was **2,500 years**, covetousness and ill will were widespread.

Bhikshus, with the increase of *covetousness and ill will*, the life-span of beings declined, their beauty declined, too.

For these humans whose life-span and beauty were declining, whose lifespan was 2,500 years, that of some of their children was 2,000 years.

17.4 Now, bhikshus, amongst those humans whose life-span was **1,000 years**, wrong view was widespread.

Bhikshus, with the increase of *wrong view*, the life-span of beings declined, their beauty declined, too.

For these humans whose life-span and beauty were declining, whose lifespan was 1,000 years, that of some of their children was 500 years.

17.5 Now, bhikshus, amongst those humans whose life-span was **500 years**, three things were widespread, that is, abnormal lust, excessive desire and deviant conduct.¹⁹⁸

With the increase of *abnormal lust, excessive desire and deviant conduct*, the life-span of beings declined, their beauty declined, too.

For these humans whose life-span and beauty were declining, whose lifespan was 500 years, that of some of their children was 250 years, and some 200 years.

17.6 Now, bhikshus, amongst those humans whose life-span was **250 years**, these things were widespread amongst humans, that is, disrespect towards mother, disrespect towards father, disrespect towards recluseship [the spiritual life], disrespect towards celibacy [the holy life], and lack of respect for clan elders.¹⁹⁹

18.1 HUMAN LIFESPAN AT ITS SHORTEST. Thus, bhikshus, by not providing funds for the poor, *poverty* became widespread.

When poverty became widespread,

When stealing became widespread,

When armed violence became widespread,

When life-taking became widespread,

When lying became widespread,

When slander became widespread,

When sexual misconduct became wide-

spread, [71] the two things,

When the harsh speech and frivolous talk became widespread, the two things,

When covetousness and ill will became widespread,

When wrong view became widespread,

stealing became widespread.

armed violence became widespread.

life-taking became widespread.

lying became widespread.

slander became widespread.

sexual misconduct became widespread.

harsh speech and frivolous talk, became widespread

covetousness and ill will, became widespread.

wrong view became widespread.

¹⁹⁸ *Adhamma, rāgo visama, lobho micchā, dhammo*. Comy, here explains “**abnormal lust**” (*adhamma, rāga*) as incest, that is, “lust between mother and mother’s sister and father’s sister and maternal uncle’s wife and other such improper situations” (*mātā mātuucchā pituucchā mātulanī ti ādike ayutta-ṭ, ṭhāne rāgo*); “**excessive greed**” (*visama, lobha*) or “neurotic desire,” as excessive greed by way of consuming things (*paribhoga, yutesu pi ṭhānesu atibala-va, lobho*, in other words, unbridled materialism and consumerism); and “**deviant conduct**” (*micchā, dhamma*) as homosexuality, ie, sex “between men and men, women with women.” (DA 3:853) [5.1]. See **Saññoga S** (A 7.48/-4 :57-59) & SD 8.7 Intro (1).

¹⁹⁹ *Amatteyyatā apetteyyatā asāmaññatā abrahmaññatā na kule, jeṭṭh’āpacāyitā*. Here “clan elders” (*kula, jeṭṭha*) should be distinguished from “household” (*gaha, pati*, lit “house-lord”), the head of the family. The former has a broader social sense.

three things,

abnormal lust, excessive desire and deviant conduct, became widespread.

When abnormal lust, excessive desire
and deviant conduct became widespread,

disrespect towards mother, disrespect towards father, disrespect towards recluship [the spiritual life], disrespect towards celibacy [the holy life], and lack of respect for family elders became widespread.

When these things became widespread, the life-span of beings declined, their beauty declined, too.

18.2 For these humans whose life-span and beauty were declining, whose lifespan was 250 years, that of their children was **100 years**.

19.1 THE LIFE-SPAN OF 10 YEARS. There will be a time, bhikshus, when the children of these humans will be **10 years**.

Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 10 years, a girl of five years will be marriageable.²⁰⁰

Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 10 years, these tastes will disappear, that is to say, ghee, butter, oil, honey, sugar and salt.

Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 10 years, *kudrūsa*²⁰¹ will be the foremost food. Bhikshus, just as today, boiled high-grade rice and meat²⁰² are the foremost food, so will *kudrūsa* rice be then.

Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 10 years, the ten wholesome courses of action²⁰³ will completely disappear. *The ten unwholesome courses of action* will shine forth exceedingly.

Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 10 years, there will be no word for ‘good’ [no concept of ‘wholesome’],²⁰⁴ what more to speak of a doer of good [wholesome].

19.2 Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 10 years, there will be those who disrespect mother, [72] who disrespect father, who disrespect recluship [the spiritual life], who disrespect celibacy [the holy life], and who lack respect for family elders, that will be honoured and praised. Just as today, there is honour and praise for those who respect mother, who respect father, who respect recluship [the spiritual life], who respect celibacy [the holy life], and who respect for family elders, even so, bhikshus, there will be honour and praise for those who disrespect mother, who disrespect father, who disrespect

²⁰⁰ This seems to be the lowest point in child-marriage, but the girl’s apparently tender age must be understood in proper metabolic ratio to the lifespan then, ie, only 10 years. This is a remarkably imaginative narrative of universal progeria (premature aging)!

²⁰¹ *Kudrūsa* or *kudrūsaka* (cf Skt *koradūṣa* or *koradūṣaka*, or *kodrava* (see Johnston 1931), *Paspalum scrobiculatum*, ie kodo millet, kodra millet, varaku (Tamil), ricegrass (Hawaii), said to be the staple (*agga, bhojana*) in the future when human life averages 10 years (**Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda S**, D 26.19/3:71); said to be a black, rough, millet grain (VA 4:822): sometimes tr as “rye” (D:RD 3:70; Miln:H 2:86). It is listed as the last item in a list of 7 kinds of grain (*dhañña*), where they are called “raw gains,” *āmaka,dhañña* (V 4:264, DA 1:78; NmA 2:396); or as “the first foods” (*pubb’anna*), contrasting with “other foods” (*apar’anna*), ie vegetables (Nc 314/176). At D 1:5 = A 2:-209, it is said that the Buddha abstains from accepting any kind of such uncooked grain.

²⁰² *Sāli,mams’odano* = *sāli* (hill rice, of high grade) + *mamsa* (meat) + *odana* (boiled rice). Rice as *vīhi* (Skt *vrīhi*) (*Oryza sativa*), or broadcast rice, had its origins in India around 3000 BCE and was certainly known to later Vedic people. It was a rainy season crop ripening in autumn but whose yield was limited. This form of rice when cooked is called *odana* (ts), ie boiled rice. The change came when the people learned and used the art of paddy transplantation or wet paddy production, which was grown as a winter crop. This better quality rice was known as *sāli* (Skt *sāli*) (R S Sharma, *Material Culture and Social Formations in Ancient India*, 1983:96, 161f). This is the surplus that created the institutions of kings (Collins, “The Discourse on What is Primary (*Aggañña Sutta*),” 1993:309). For other socio-economic factors of the Ganges Plain during the Buddha’s time, see **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16) = SD 9 Intro (7).

²⁰³ “The ten wholesome course of action” (*dasa kusala kamma,patha*) are abstaining from killing, from stealing, from sexual misconduct, from lying, from malicious talk, from harsh speech, from frivolous chatter, from covetousness, from ill will, and from wrong view: see **Sāleyyaka S** (M 41/1:285-290) = SD 5.7. They are the antithesis of the unwholesome courses of actions, summarized in §18: for details, see SD 5.7(2).

²⁰⁴ “Good” (*kusala*), usu tr as “wholesome,” but here clearly refers to a general term for “good” as against “evil.” The ancient word for “good” would be *puñña*, but it is unlikely that a Buddhist sutta would promote such a notion. See **Beyond good and evil** = SD 18.7 esp (6).

reclusership [the spiritual life], who disrespect celibacy [the holy life], and who lack respect for family elders.

20.1 IMMORAL LIFESTYLES. Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 10 years, there will be no word for ‘mother’ or ‘maternal aunt’ or ‘mother’s sister-in-law’ or ‘teacher’s wife’ or ‘guru’s women-folk.’²⁰⁵ The world will fall into confusion [promiscuity],²⁰⁶ becoming like goats and sheep, chickens and pigs, dogs and jackals.

20.2 Bhikshus, amongst whose life-span is 10 years, deep hatred will establish itself amongst these beings, one against the other, there will be deep ill will, serious mental defect, a fiercely murderous mind, in child against mother, or mother against child, or father against son, or son against father, or brother against sister, sister against brother.

Bhikshus, just as *deep hatred, deep ill will, serious mental defect, a fiercely murderous mind*, is established when a stalker sees an animal,²⁰⁷ even so, bhikshus, deep hatred will establish itself amongst these beings, one against the other, there will be deep ill will, serious mental defects, a fiercely murderous mind, in child against mother, or mother against child, or father against son, or son against father, or brother against sister, sister against brother. [73]

21.1 THE SEVEN-DAY WAR. Bhikshus, amongst whose life-span is 10 years, there will be a seven-day “**sword-interval**” [warring period].²⁰⁸ They will perceive one another as beasts. There will appear sharp swords in their hands. They will take the lives of one another with their sharp swords, regarding one another as beasts.

21.2 Then, bhikshus, there will be some amongst these beings who would think:

‘Let nothing happen to us! Let nothing happen to them! What now if we enter the thick grass, or the dense forest, or the wild trees, or rivers difficult to ford, or rocky cliffs, and live on the forest, fruits and roots [fruits and roots of the forest]!’²⁰⁹

So for seven days, they resorted to the thick grass, or the dense forest, or the wild trees, or rivers difficult to ford, or rocky cliffs, living on the forest, fruits and roots [fruits and roots of the forest].

21.3 At the end of the seven days, they emerged from the thick grass, and the dense forest, and the wild trees, and rivers difficult to ford, and rocky cliffs, and having embraced one another, they will greet one another, and comfort one another,²¹⁰ thus:

²⁰⁵ *Dasa, vassāyukesu, bhikkhave, manussesu na bhavissati mātā’ti vā mātucchā’ti vā mātulanī’ti vā ācariya, bhariyā’ti vā garūnam dārā’ti vā.* Here *dārā* is usu rendered generically as “women, womenfolk,” ie the wife or wives, and daughter/s. Comy, however, takes *garu* as referring to the father’s brothers, younger (*cūla, pitu*) or elder (*mahā, pitu*) (DA 3:853). The tr here takes “teacher” (*ācariya*) as religious teachers, and “guru” as teachers of secular subjects.

²⁰⁶ *Sambheda*, ie social order and harmony break down, and people lose their humanity, falling into subhuman levels of thought and conduct, despite physically human.

²⁰⁷ “Animal,” *miga*, also tr as “deer,” but the context here is clearly generic.

²⁰⁸ *Satth’antara, kappa*. Although the war is said to last for “seven days,” this duration should be understood as relative to those whose life-span is 10 years at most. Comy speaks of **3 kinds of “intervals”** (*antara, kappa*), ie 3 things that trouble human society, viz the famine interval (*dubbhikkh’antarakappa*) caused by excessive greed, the “disease” interval or epidemic (*rog’antara, kappa*) caused by excessive delusion (ie ignorance), and the “sword” or war interval (*satth’antara, kappa*) caused by excessive hate. Those who perish from a famine are mostly reborn as pretas because of their great desire for food. Those who perish due to widespread illness or epidemics are mostly reborn as devas on account of their lovingkindness wishing that everyone be free of the disease. Those who perish in war, however, are mostly reborn in hell, due to “a powerful hatred of one another” (*aññam-aññam balavāghātāya*) (DA 3:854). The term *satth’antara, kappa* is alluded to in Comy to **Paṇihita Accha Vg** (A 1.5.5/1:9), those with a sense of humanity (*manussa, dhamma*) are troubled by the war, feeling religious urgency (*saṃvega*) so that they go on to cultivate wholesome conduct (AA 1:58). See Ledi Sayadaw, *Buddhist Review*, Jan 1916.

²⁰⁹ *Mā ca mayam kañci, mā ca amhe koci, yan nūna mayam tiṇa, gahanam vā vana, gahanam vā rukkhā, gahanam vā nadī, viduggam vā pabbata, visamaṃ vā pavisitvā vana, mūla, phal’āhārā yāpeyyamā’ti.*

²¹⁰ “They will embrace...comfort one another,” *aññam-aññam āliṅgitvā sabhāgāyissanti samassāsissanti. Sabhāgāyissati* (Be) is a problem word, prob corrupt, poss with haplology of *-ga-*, reading *sabhāgagāyissanti*; Ee *Se sabhā gāyissanti* (“they will sing (and celebrate) in the assembly-hall”), which is curious; Ce *sabhāgāyissanti*; DPL

‘Hooray to the beings, sir, you’re alive! Hooray to the beings, sir, you’re alive!’²¹¹

The return to spiritual growth

21.4 THE GROWTH OF BLESSINGS. Then, bhikshus, it will occur to those beings, thus:

‘Indeed, on account of turning to unwholesome things that we have come to such a loss of relatives for such a long time!

What now if we are to act wholesomely! What wholesome act shall we do?

(1) What now if we are to abstain from taking life. Let us undertake this wholesome state as our practice!’ They would abstain from taking life; they would practise keeping to this wholesome state [practice].

On account of undertaking these wholesome states, both their life and beauty [74] increased.

Amongst those beings of ten-year life-span whose life and beauty increased, their children will have a life-span of **20 years**.

22.1 Then, bhikshus, it will occur to those beings, thus:

‘Indeed, on account of undertaking these wholesome states that we have increased both our life and beauty! What now if we are to do still more wholesome good! What can we do that is wholesome?’²¹²

(2) Come let us abstain from taking the not-given!

(3) Come let us abstain from sexual misconduct!

(4) Come let us abstain from falsehood!

(5) Come let us abstain from slander!

(6) Come let us abstain from harsh speech!

(7) Come let us abstain from frivolous talk!

(8) Come let us give up covetousness!

(9) Come let us give up ill will!

(10) Come let us give up wrong view!

22.2 What now if we are to give up the three things—abnormal lust, excessive desire and deviant conduct? Let us undertake this wholesome practice!’

‘Indeed, on account of undertaking these wholesome states that we have increase both our life and beauty! What now if we are to do still more wholesome good! What wholesome act shall we do?’

22.3 What now if we are to show respect towards mother, respect towards father, respect towards recluseship [the spiritual life], respect towards celibacy [the holy life], and respect for family elders?’

And so they will show respect towards mother, respect towards father, respect towards recluseship [the spiritual life], respect towards celibacy [the holy life], and respect for family elders—they will undertake this wholesome state as their practice.

22.4 THE INCREASE IN LIFE-SPAN. On account of undertaking these wholesome states, both their life and beauty increased.

Amongst those with a life-span of	20 years	
whose life and beauty increased,	their children will have a life-span of	40 years.
Amongst those with a life-span of	40 years	

sabhāgayissanti (without def). T W Rhys Davids proposes the reading *sabhāgā bhavissanti*, rendering it as “be of one accord.”

²¹¹ *Diṭṭhā, bho, sattā jīvasi, diṭṭhā, bho, sattā jīvasī’ti*. Comy explains that just as those people are happy to be alive (*aham jīvāmi*), they are similarly happy to see others alive too (*tvam pi tathā jīvasi*) (DA 3:855). *Diṭṭhā* is an indecl (Skt *diṣṭyā*, instr of *diṭṭhi*) [PED *dr̥ṣṭyā* is wrong; SED 480 sv *diṣṭi*], ie, an exclamation of joy; Thank heavens! What luck! Congratulations (on your good fortune); Hurrah! (D 2:99, 3:73; S 5:153; J 1:362, 4:18) (DPL). See S:B 1920 n139.

²¹² Be Ce Se *Kim kusalam kareyyāma*; Ee omits. From here on in this section, the Pali lists the remaining courses of wholesome actions only briefly as follows: *Yannūna mayam adinnādānā virameyyāma, kāmesumicchācārā virameyyāma, musāvādā virameyyāma, piṣuṇāya vācāya virameyyāma, pharusāya vācāya virameyyāma, samphappalāpā virameyyāma, abhijjham pajaheyyāma, byāpādam pajaheyyāma, micchādīṭṭhim pajaheyyāma*. Here *yannūna mayam* (tr here as “come let us...”) can be prefixed to each of the other 8 sentences (ie the remaining 8 wholesome courses of actions).

whose life and beauty increased, Amongst those with a life-span of	their children will have a life-span of 80 years	80 years.
whose life and beauty increased, Amongst those with a life-span of	their children will have a life-span of 160 years	160 years.
whose life and beauty increased, Amongst those with a life-span of	their children will have a life-span of 320 years	320 years.
whose life and beauty increased, Amongst those with a life-span of	their children will have a life-span of 640 years	640 years.
whose life and beauty increased, Amongst those with a life-span of	their children will have a life-span of 2,000 years	2,000 years.
whose life and beauty increased, Amongst those with a life-span of	their children will have a life-span of 4,000 years	4,000 years.
whose life and beauty increased, Amongst those with a life-span of	their children will have a life-span of 8,000 years	8,000 years.
whose life and beauty increased, Amongst those with a life-span of	their children will have a life-span of 20,000 years	20,000 years.
whose life and beauty increased, Amongst those with a life-span of	their children will have a life-span of 40,000 years	40,000 years. [75]
whose life and beauty increased, Amongst those with a life-span of	their children will have a life-span of 80,000 years	80,000 years.

23.1 Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 80,000 years, a maiden of 500 years is marriageable.²¹³

23.2 THE UNIVERSAL MONARCH SANKHA. Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 80,000 years, there will be three illnesses, that is, desire, lack of appetite, and ageing [decay].²¹⁴

Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 80,000 years, this **Jambu,dīpa** [this world],²¹⁵ will be powerful and prosperous, with villages, market towns and capitals, no more than a chicken's flight apart.²¹⁶

Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 80,000 years, this Jambu,dīpa, will be crowded with people—it is Avīci,²¹⁷ I say—just like a forest of reeds or a forest of rushes.

Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 80,000 years, this **Benares** [Baranasi]²¹⁸ will be the royal city [capital] called **Ketu,matī**, crowded with people, a mighty and prosperous population, and with abundant food.

²¹³ Cf **Araka S** (A 7.70), an account of the founder of a non-Buddhist religion (*tittha,kara*), Araka, when human life-span is 60,000 years (*saṭṭhi,vassa,sahassāni*), and women are marriagable at 500, and there are only these 6 afflictions: cold, heat, hunger, thirst, voiding, and peeing (A 7.70.3/4:138) = SD 16.17. The Sutta theme there is that of impermanence, and closes with the same exhortation to meditate. Collins misread the life-span as 80,000 years (1998:492).

²¹⁴ *Icchā anasanam jarā*.

²¹⁵ *Jambu,dīpa* usu refers to the Indian subcontinent, ie the “central continent” (V 5:3; D 2:167; Thī 498; A 1:227; Miln 3); but here (foll D:RD 3:72 n1) is prob a synecdoche for “this world” (*loka*), ie, the world of beings (*satta,-loka*): on the 3 kinds of world, see **Rohitassa S** (S 2:26/1:61 f = A 4.45/2:47-49) = SD 7.2.

²¹⁶ “No more than a chicken's flight apart,” *kukkuṭa,sampātikā*, ie close enough for a chicken to fly amongst them. Chickens, as we know, do not fly willingly. They would often flutter, then fall helplessly hitting the ground backwards. Comy notes a possible vl as *kukkuṭa,sampādikā* (DA 3:855).

²¹⁷ *Avīci* (“uninterrupted”): see Intro (5.3).

²¹⁸ *Ayam bārāṇasī*. The discourse venue is stated as “Mātulā in Magadha” [§1.1] (cf A 3:58), but notes T W Rhys Davids, “the allusion must have been rather to the city as contemporary than to any contiguity in space” (D:RD 3:73 n2. RD adds that the story could have originated “among the Kāsīs” (whose capital is Benares). There are 2 possibilities here. One, a grammatical explanation, is that “this” (*ayam*) is exophoric (referring to something “external” or absent): we could say “this present Benares.” See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exophora>. The other, a historical explanation, is the possibility that the Sutta was composed in or around Benares, so that the first explanation also obtains.

Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 80,000 years, in this Jambu,dīpa [this world], there will be 84,000 cities, with Ketu,matī as the royal capital.

24 Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 80,000 years, there will arise in the royal city of Ketu,matī, a rajah named **Saṅkha**,²¹⁹ a wheel-turner, a Dharma-rajah [a just ruler], conqueror of the four quarters, a country blessed with stability, and a possessor of these seven jewels. These are seven jewels, that is to say: the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the steward jewel, and the commander jewel as the seventh.²²⁰

And he had more than a thousand sons, brave, heroic in form, defeating the armies of others.

And he dwelt over this earth bounded by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.²²¹

THE ADVENT OF METTEYYA BUDDHA

25 THE BUDDHA METTEYYA. Bhikshus, amongst humans whose life-span is 80,000 years, [76] there will arise in the world, the Blessed One, arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, accomplished in knowledge and conduct, well-gone, world-knower, unexcelled leader of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed—

just as I have myself today arisen in the world, an arhat [worthy], fully self-awakened one, accomplished in knowledge and conduct, well-gone, world-knower, unexcelled leader of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.

Having realized by his own direct knowledge, this world with its gods, its Maras [evil tempters] and its Brahmas [high gods], this generation, with its recluses²²² and brahmins, its rulers²²² and people, he makes it known to others—

just as I myself today, having realized by my own direct knowledge, this world with its gods, its Maras [evil tempters] and its Brahmas [high gods], this generation, with its recluses and brahmins, its rulers and people, make it known to others

He teaches the Dharma, good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, endowed with meaning and phrasing; he proclaims the holy life that is entirely complete and pure—

just as I myself today teach the Dharma, good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, endowed with meaning and phrasing; I proclaim the holy life that is entirely complete and pure.

He will be attended by a community of monks of numerous thousands—

just as I myself today am attended by an order of monks of numerous hundreds.

26 Then, bhikshus, the rajah named Saṅkha will raise up the palace²²³ built by the rajah Mahā Panāda.²²⁴ Having raised up the palace, he will dwell there, but will then give it up as an offering to the recluses, brahmins, the poor, the wandering [the homeless], mendicants and beggars.²²⁵

²¹⁹ **Saṅkha**, says Comy, once with his son, both reed-workers (*naḷa,kāra*), who made a hut out of reed and fig-leaves for a pratyeka-buddha. After death, they were reborn in heaven. In due course, the son became Mahā Panāda, and later the monk Bhaddaji. The father was reborn as Saṅkha. (D 3:856)

²²⁰ See §2a above.

²²¹ *So imam pathaviṃ sāgara,pariyantam adaṇḍena asatthena dhammena abhivijjiya ajjhāvasati.*

²²² *Deva*, here in the sense of “gods by convention” (*sammati,deva*), ie kings or rulers. The other 2 types of *deva* are “gods by rebirth” (*upapatti,deva*) and “gods by purification” (*visuddhi,deva*), ie the Buddhas, pratyeka-buddhas and arhats. (Nc 307, KhpA 123). See §2 & n where the voc “your majesty” is *deva*.

²²³ “Palace,” *yūpa* (Tha 163 = J 2:334; DA 3:856), orig means “sacrificial post” (D 1:141; A 4:41; J 4:302, 6:211; SnA 321, 322; DA 1:294; DhsA 145; cf Miln 21): cf Tha 163 where Norman tr *yūpa* as “pillar” (made of gold): Tha:N 156 n163. The jewelled palace was “raised up” (*ussāpeti*) from the depths of the Ganges (at Payāga, MA 1:178, or at Koti,gāma, J 2:333, ThaA 2:39 f; ie modern Allahabad), into which it sank with Mahā Panāda’s death (DA 3:856). Apparently, this is done by magical powers either of the wheel-turner himself or of someone at his command. See J Auboyer, *Le trône et son symbolisme dans l’Inde ancienne*, shows how such poles came to refer to royal thrones and thence palaces (1949:74 ff): qu by Collins 1998: 615 n30.

Then he will shave off his hair and beard, don the saffron robe, go forth from the home for the homeless life before the Blessed One, Metteyya, the arhat, fully self-awakened, accomplished in knowledge and conduct, well-gone, world-knower, unexcelled leader of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.

And, having thus gone forth, he will, in no long time, dwelling alone, aloof, diligent, exertive, and resolute, realize it for himself through his own direct knowledge, in this very life, entered and dwelled in that unsurpassed goal of the holy life for the sake of which clansmen rightly [77] go forth from the household life into homelessness.

THE LESSON OF THE STORY

The four focusses of mindfulness

27 Bhikshus, dwelt with yourself as an island, with yourself as refuge, with no other refuge—dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge.²²⁶

And how, bhikshus, does a monk dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge?

Here, bhikshus, a monk,

- (1) having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world, dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, observing body in the body;
- (2) having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world, dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful observing feeling in the feelings;
- (3) having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world, dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, observing mind in the mind;
- (4) having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world, the monk dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, observing dharmas in the dharmas.

That, bhikshus, is how a monk dwells with himself as an island, with himself as refuge, with no other refuge—he dwells with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge.

The five blessings of a monk

28.1 Keep to the pasture, bhikshus, the haunt [range] of our ancestors [fathers].²²⁷ Keeping to your pastures, the haunt of our ancestors,²²⁸

you will grow in	life-span;
you will grow in	beauty, too;
you will grow in	happiness, too;
you will grow in	wealth, too;

²²⁴ **Mahā Panāda** is a legendary king, the son of Suruci, king of Mithilā (capital of Videha): see Mahā or Suruci J (J 264/2:333; cf Divy p57). He owned a fabulous palace, made of the 7 jewels [gold, silver, pearl, sapphire, beryl, diamond, coral (DPL 402; BHSD 450)] by the divine architect, Vissa, kamma, with a hundred storeys high, one thousand bow-shots (25 leagues) high and 16 leagues wide, and held 6000 musicians (Tha 163 f; DA 3:856; ThaA 2:40; ApA 566). Mahā Panāda was reborn as the monk **Bhaddaji**, who becomes an arhat as a layman, and with his father's permission, ordains as a monk (J 2:331). In this connection it is said that, a layman, having heard the Dharma, becomes an arhat, must go forth right away; if not, he would attain final nirvana" (*dhammaṃ suṇanto arahatte patiṭṭhāsi, ten'assa idān'eva pabbajitum yuttam, no ce pabbajati, parinibbāyissatī'ti*, ThaA 2:39)

²²⁵ *Atha kho bhikkhave saṅkho nāma rājā yo so yūpo rañṇā mahā, panādena kārāpito, tam yūpaṃ ussāpetvā ajjhāvasitvā tam datvā vissajjitvā samaṇa, brāhmaṇa, kapaṇ'addhika, vaṇibbaka, yācakānaṃ dānaṃ datvā*. Comy says that he gave the jewelled palace away, thinking, "Let this palace be dismantled!" (*ayam pāsādo vippakiriyatū'ti*) (DA 3:856), meaning that the jewels could be taken by them for their own benefit.

²²⁶ See §1b above.

²²⁷ Cf §1c above.

²²⁸ The whole of §27 up to here (excluding what follows) is as at §1b (up to "ancestors"). The reference to Māra there, repeats or resumes at the end of the Sutta [§28.2].

you will grow in power, too.

(1) THE FOUR PATHS TO SPIRITUAL POWER.²²⁹ And what, bhikshus, is a **life-span for a monk**?²³⁰

Here, bhikshus, a monk

1. cultivates the path to spiritual power [basis of success] *furnished with concentration gained through enthusiasm [will-power] (**chanda**) and through striving*,²³¹

2. cultivates the path to spiritual power [basis of success] *furnished with concentration gained through energy (**viriya**) and through effort-activity*;

3. cultivates the path to spiritual power [basis of success] *furnished with concentration gained through the mind (**citta**) and through effort-activity*;

4. cultivates the path to spiritual power [basis of success] *furnished with concentration gained through mental investigation (**vīmaṃsā**) and through effort-activity*.

Through the cultivation and making abundant of these four paths to spiritual power, if one wishes, one could remain for a life-span or the remainder of the lifespan.²³²

This, bhikshus, is the life-span of a monk.

(2) MORAL VIRTUE AND SPIRITUAL TRAINING. And what, bhikshus, is **beauty for a monk**?²³³

Here, bhikshus, a monk is morally virtuous, [78] he dwells restrained in keeping with the restraint of the monastic code (Pāṭimokkha), seeing danger in the smallest fault, and having taking up the training-rules, he trains himself in them.²³⁴

This, bhikshus, is the beauty of a monk.

(3) THE DHYANAS. And what, bhikshus, is **happiness for a monk**?²³⁵

Here, bhikshus, a monk²³⁶

1. Here, bhikshus, a monk, quite detached from sensual pleasures, detached from unwholesome mental states, a monk enters and dwells in the first dhyana, accompanied by initial application and sustained application, accompanied by zest and happiness, born of seclusion.

2. With the stilling of initial application and sustained application, by gaining inner tranquillity and oneness of mind, the monk enters and dwells in the second dhyana, free from initial application and sustained application, accompanied by zest and happiness, born of concentration.

3. With the fading away of zest, the monk remains equanimous, mindful and fully aware, and experiences happiness with the body. He enters and dwells in the third dhyana, of which the noble ones declare, ‘Happily he dwells in equanimity and mindfulness.’

²²⁹ This basic formula for the 4 iddhi, pāda is found at D 2:213 f, 3:77; M 1:103, 2:11, 4:365, 5:254-293; A 1:39, 297, 2:256, 3:81 f, 4:464; Vbh 216-226; Pm 1:111, 113, 2:205. For discussion, see Rupert Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, 2001: 81-103 (ch 3). See also **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16) = SD 9 Intro (9b.3).

²³⁰ *Kiñ ca, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno āyusmim?*

²³¹ *Chanda, samādhi, padhāna, saṅkhāra, samannāgataṃ iddhipādaṃ bhāveti*. Here BDict renders the 4 *iddhi, pāda* as “[1] concentration of Intention (*padhāna-saṅkhāra-samannāgata*), [2] concentration of Energy (*viriya-s...*), [3] concentration of Consciousness (*citta-s...*), and [4] concentration of Investigation (*vīmaṃsā-s...*) accomplished by effort of will.” But here I am influenced by the translations of U Thittila (Vbh:Th 283) & Gethin 2001: 81. See **Moggallāna S** (S 51.31/5:288 f) = SD 27.7.

²³² *So imesaṃ catunnaṃ iddhi, pādānaṃ bhāvitattā bahulikatattā ākaṅkhamāno kappam vā tittheyya kappāva-sesaṃ vā*. The underscored phrase (also in **Mahā,parinibbāna S**, D 16.3.3/2:103 = SD 9) is sometimes rendered, with a bent for the mythical, as “for an aeon, or the remainder of an aeon” (D:RD 2:111, 3:75); but also as “for a full century, or the remaining part of a century” (D:W 246, 405), which is problematic, unless we take *avasesa* to mean “a little more”: see their respective nn. I understand the former “life-span” (*kappa*) as referring to the *karmic* life-span, ie, as inherited from our karma, and the latter as the natural or “statistical” life-span of the times. In other words, with *iddhi*, we are able to extend our “allotted” years to a *full* life-span (about 100-120 years in the Buddha’s and our own times). See also **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16) = SD 9 Intro (9c).

²³³ *Bhikkhuno vaṇṇasmim*.

²³⁴ Full a full listing of these, see **Sāmañña.phala S** (D 2.43-62/1:68 = SD 8.10).

²³⁵ *Bhikkhuno sukhasmim*.

²³⁶ The def that follows here is also that of “right concentration” (*sammā samādhi*): see D 22.21/2:314 f, M 141.-31/3:252; also D 2.75-81/1:73-75, M 27.19-22/1:181 f & **Dhyana** = SD 8.4 (4).

4. With the abandoning of joy and abandoning of pain,²³⁷ and with the earlier disappearance of pleasure and displeasure, attains and dwells in **the fourth dhyana** that is neither painful nor pleasant, and with mindfulness fully purified by equanimity.²³⁸

This, bhikshus, is the happiness of a monk.

(4) THE FOUR DIVINE ABODES. And what, bhikshus, is **wealth for a monk**?²³⁹

Here, bhikshus, a monk²⁴⁰

1. Here, bhikshus, a monk, with a heart of lovingkindness, he dwells suffusing one quarter, the second, the third, the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere and to everyone as well as to himself, he dwells suffusing the whole world with lovingkindness that is vast, exalted, boundless, without hate, without ill-will.

2. With a heart of compassion, he dwells suffusing one quarter, the second, the third, the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere and to everyone as well as to himself, he dwells suffusing the whole world with compassion that is vast, exalted, boundless, without hate, without ill-will.

3. With a heart of gladness, he dwells suffusing one quarter, the second, the third, the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere and to everyone as well as to himself, he dwells suffusing the whole world with gladness that is vast, exalted, boundless, without hate, without ill-will.

4. With a heart of equanimity, he dwells suffusing one quarter, the second, the third, the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere and to everyone as well as to himself, he dwells suffusing the whole world with equanimity that is vast, exalted, boundless, without hate, without ill-will.²⁴¹

This, bhikshus, is the wealth of a monk.

(5) SPIRITUAL LIBERATION. And what, bhikshus, is **power for a monk**?²⁴²

Here, bhikshus, a monk, having right here and now realized for himself through direct knowledge, attained and dwelled in the liberation of mind and liberation by wisdom²⁴³ that are influx-free with the destruction of the mental influxes.²⁴⁴

²³⁷ “Joy...pain,” *sukha...dukkha*: this refers to *physical* feelings. The next phrase—“pleasure and displeasure,” *domanassa...somanassa*—refers to *mental* feelings, transcended earlier. Mental feelings must be overcome first so that the mind is not distracted by itself, as it were. Then, all the other feelings (arising from the physical sense-contacts) are transcended. On the significance of this, see **Sall’atthena S** (S 36.6/4:207-210) = SD 5.5.

²³⁸ Here, **Vibhaṅga** gives 3 factors of the 4th dhyana—equanimity (*upekhā*), mindfulness (*sati*) and one-pointedness of mind (*cittassa ek’aggatā*)—according to the Sutta analysis (Vbh 261), and 2 factors—equanimity and one-pointedness of the mind—according to the Abhidhamma analysis (Vbh 164; Vism 4.183/165). See also **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 8.83/1:75) = SD 8.10 & **Dhyana** = SD 8.4 (5.4).

²³⁹ *Bhikkhuno bhogasmim*.

²⁴⁰ For similes, see **Te,vijja S** (D 13.76-79/1:251) = SD 1.8; see also: **D 2**:185, 250, **3**:49, 78, 223; **M 1**:38, 283, 297, 335×2, 351, 369, **2**:76, 77, 78, 81, 195, 207, **3**:146; **S 4**:296, 322, 351, 352×2, **5**:115, 116, 117, 118; **A 1**:183, 192, **2**:172, 175, 184, **3**:225, **4**:390, **5**:299, 343, 344.

²⁴¹ This is stock (without parable): **Cakka,vatti Sīha.nāda S** (D 26.28a(4)/3:48) = SD 36.10 (said to be “in the wealth for a monk (*bhikkhuno bhogasmim*),” **Saṅgīti S** (D 33.1.11(6)/3:223); **Mahā Vedalla S** (M 43.31/1:297) = SD 35.1, **Aṭṭhaka,nāgara S** (M 52.8-11/1:351 f) = SD 41.2 (leading to either arhathood or non-return), **Jīvaka S** (M 55.6/1:369) = SD 43.4, **Dhānañjāni S** (M 97.32-33/2:195) = SD 4.9, **Subha S** (M 99.24-27/2:207 f) = SD 38.6, **Anuruddha S** (M 127.7/3:146) = SD 54.10; **Go,datta S** (S 41.7/4:296); (**Saṅgha**) **Uposatha S** (A 4.190.4/2:184) = SD 15.10b, **Dasama Gaha,pati S** (A 11.17.5-6/5:344) = SD 41.2; **Pm 2**:39; **Vbh 13.1-2/272, 699/282**, see 272-284 for comy.

²⁴² *Bhikkhuno balasmim*.

²⁴³ “**Liberation of mind and liberation through wisdom**,” respectively, *ceto,vimutti* (or, liberation by concentration, ie through destruction of the mental hindrances) and *paññā,vimutti* (liberation through insight) (A 1:60). One who is *liberated by wisdom* “may not have reached the 8 deliverances (*vimokkha = jhāna*) in his own body, but through seeing with wisdom, his mental influxes are destroyed” (M 70.16/1:478). All arhats are perfectly liberated in the same way from ignorance and suffering, but are distinguished into two types on the basis of their proficiency in concentration. Those who can attain the 8 deliverances (*aṭṭha,vimokkha*), which include the four formless attainments and the attainment of cessation, are called *liberated both ways*, that is, liberated from the physical body by means of the formless dhyanas, and from all defilements by the path of arhathood. Saṅgha, like the arhats Sāriputta

This, bhikshus, is the power of a monk.

28.2 Bhikshus, I consider no other power, the one power, so difficult to subdue, that is to say, bhikshus, *the power of Māra!*²⁴⁵ [79]

Bhikshus, on account of taking up wholesome states, this merit²⁴⁶ thus grows.”

The Blessed One said this. The monks joyfully approved²⁴⁷ of the Blessed One’s word.

— evaṃ —

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and Moggallāna, is “liberated both ways” (*ubhato,bhāga,vimutta*). The differences between the two types of liberation are given in **Mahā,nidāna S** (D 2:70 f) and **Kīṭāgiri S** (M 1:477 f). For full list of the 8 deliverances, see **Mahā Nidāna S** (D 15.35/2:70 f). For full list of the 8 deliverances, see **Mahā Nidāna S** (D 15.35/2:70 f) = SD 5.17.35. See also D 3:262, 228; **Vimokkha S**, A 8.66/4:306; also M 120.37/3:103 = SD 3.4.37.

²⁴⁴ “**Mental influxes**,” *āsava*. The term *āsava* (lit “inflow, outflow”) comes from *ā-savati* “flows towards” (ie either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously translated as taints (“deadly taints”, RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, evil (influence), or simply left untranslated. The Abhidhamma lists 4 *āsavas*: the influx of (1) sense-desire (*kām’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav’āsava*), (3) wrong views (*diṭṭh’āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijj’āsava*) (D 16.1.12/2:82, 16.2.4/2:91, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These 4 are also known as “floods” (*ogha*) and “yokes” (*yoga*). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influx of views) is probably older and is found more frequently in the suttas (D 3:216, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these *āsavas* is equivalent to arhathood. See BDict: *āsava*.

²⁴⁵ See §1c where Māra is first referred to in this Sutta.

²⁴⁶ Comy does not think the merit arises from conquest of Māra, but it is the merit of these four groups of moral teachings, beginning with right conduct and culminating with arhathood. Māra is routed after that. (DA 3:858)

²⁴⁷ “Joyfully approved,” *attamanā...abhinandunī*.

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